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THE LADY FROM L.U.S.T. #6 TO RUSSIA WITH L.U.S.T.



*Undercover Agent
Oh Oh Sex tries
to penetrate
Russia —and vice versa*



Rod Gray

THE ORGY WAS AT ITS PEAK...

The dancers were all naked—there were twelve of them, one for every man present. The musicians kept up a muted throbbing sound with their instruments.

There were other sounds, too—erotic cries, the slap of flesh against flesh, the harsh raspings of excited men and women. It all seemed to be part of the orchestration.

My mouth was dry as I stared. Involuntarily, my hips moved back and forth. I could not keep them still.

Then I saw Serge, my Kremlin lover-boy.

He sat there as if mesmerized, staring at the undulating belly of one of the dancers, the one with the flashing red ruby in her navel. His jaw hung slack, and he was idly toying with a gold cigarette lighter in his hand.

Beams of light flashed back and forth between the ruby and the polished surface of the lighter. It was a carnal Morse code!

TO RUSSIA WITH L.U.S.T.

by Rod Gray
an espionage novel

A TOWER BOOK

TO RUSSIA WITH L.U.S.T.

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Chapter ONE

I was halfway up the wall of the Embassy building.

The suction discs at my knees and elbows held firm to the cold stone, but my muscles were quivering with the strain and I was gasping for breath. My sweating forehead touched the wall while I panted for renewed strength to go on up to the window fifty feet above me. I had to enter that window to commit a robbery.

I get in spots like this, from time to time.

My name is Eve Drum. I am the lady from L.U.S.T.—the League of Undercover Spies and Terrorists—a branch of the United States Secret Service out of the C.I.A. by way of the National Security Agency. My assignments take me into die-ins and kill-ins from time to time. I get to do groovy things like zap murderers, steal formulas, hijack scientists. Like now, I was trying to break into the Russian Embassy building.

Tough assignment? You bet. But as the Marines say, the impossible takes a little longer. So I dragged some more city-polluted air into my lungs and started moving upward toward the living room of the Visiting Dignitary

Suite. There was a code-book in a wall safe there that L.U.S.T. wanted for its own.

So here I was, my otherwise naked body wrapped in a skin-tight black cotton body stocking, making my climb. My garment had a hood attached that covered all my head except the lower forehead, cheeks, eyes, nose and chin. In it, on this dark night, I was just about invisible. There was a belt about my middle that had little compartments in it for holding various odds and ends that I might need to accomplish my job.

Slurp, slurp, slurp; the sound of suction discs letting go their hold as I inched my way further up the sheer stone wall. I did not look down at the almost empty street, and I was only faintly aware of the whisper of tires as a car or two went along it; I looked at stone and then more stone, and to vary the monotony I glanced upward at the window that was my goal. I seemed no nearer to it than when I had paused to rest.

All good things come to an end, however, so my right hand finally hooked its fingers on the ledge of that window as I hauled my girl-girl body upward to peer into a dark room. Nobody home. Hooray for my side. I fumbled at my belt for a nifty little length of blued steel that us cat burglars find very handy for opening reluctant windows.

I slipped the strip into a tiny opening between the upper and lower window, slid it around, unhooked a bolt, and moved it back—very gently. All this time I was praying that the suction discs on my knees would continue to grip firmly, and that my left hand, with which I maintained my balance on the window ledge, would not go weak. It was a long fall to the pavement far below.

I crawled onto the ledge. I opened the window.

Then the Drum body slipped through the opening and I planted my feet on a thick rug. I rested my behind on the inside part of the window ledge and stripped off the suction discs, dropping them near the window for easy recovery if I had to go back down the way I had come up, in a hurry.

My cotton-clad feet made no sound as they took me across the room toward a picture hanging over the mantelpiece. There was a safe dial behind the picture, but our man in the Russian embassy—a servant from the Ukraine who had discovered the fleshpots of New York and needed money to enjoy them—had informed us that this was just a dummy safe. You could turn the dials but no safe door ever opened. It was a fake, it had no combination, it was there just to fool an eager-beaverette like me, if I didn't know better.

The safe was inside a step table beside a lounge chair. The table was fastened to a steel plate bolted to the floor. Nobody but nobody could carry off that safe. The only way to get at the code book inside it was to open its door.

My father is a locksmith. He has taught his only daughter all he knows about the art of opening safes. As a result, I am an expert at opening any and all types of safes, which is why I get juicy assignments like this one I was working on now.

I knelt down, I plugged a stethoscope into my ears and placed the disc against the surface of the safe. My fingers touched the dial and began to move it slowly.

I also held my breath. Even with a stethoscope to magnify its sound, the click of a tumbler is not very loud.

It seemed to take forever, but finally—
click

The number was 20. I went on turning the dial. *Click* again, at number 14. More turns, slowly, And then the third *click*, at 31.

In a shade under thirteen seconds, the safe door was open. I slid a hand inside. I brought out a sheaf of greenbacks, American style. There was more than twenty thousand dollars in that packet. I sighed for the might-have-been, back to my adolescent years when I had decided I was going to be Penelope Courage, girl safe-cracker. Alas for girlish dreams.

I put back the money and drew out a narrow book. One riffle of its pages told me it was the codebook. I reached into my belt, lifting out a special Minox infrared camera. With this little beauty I could take snapshots in a dark room with perfect ease.

I opened the book and started clicking away.

No sweat. I figured I was home free.

The Minox was filming page 4 when a light went on in the next room, which, judging by the startled glance I gave it over my shoulder, was a bedroom. I stabbed my eyes around the living room where I was bent double at the step table. I could see everything in the living room quite clearly, now.

There was a mirror on the wall to my right, over a built-in bookcase that extended from the fireplace to the far wall. The mirror showed the bed, and the figure of a shapely brunette standing beside it, letting a mink stole slide off her glossy white shoulders.

She was no Russian, not that dish.

Svelte and smooth inside a Givenchy original, her milky skin bulged at the low vee of her bodice, where the gown panels were trying to help her support her love jugs at the proper angle. She was forty inches there. Me, I'm only two inches smaller, so I ought to know.

Her shoulders were like cream and her flawless white arms were unmarred by so much as a goosepimple.

A man said, in a thick Russian accent, "We have the whole night before us, Magda dear. There is no rush."

He came into view, big, blond and handsome in a bullish sort of way. His deep chest and broad shoulders made me think of weight-lifters. I shivered as I imagined the strength of those long arms of his. There was the faint trace of a scar about his chin. He was one gorgeous male animal.

His arms caught the brunette and crushed her against him. His open mouth came down on her parted lips. They strained together.

I shook myself back to duty. No time to indulge in voyeurism at the moment. I had a job to finish.

The Minox camera clicked. I turned a page. The camera worked again. Only a few more pages to go, and I would be done.

Somebody moaned. I risked a glance at the mirror over my right shoulder, and froze with my finger on the shutter release. The Russian was visible only from the waist down. The rest of him was hidden by the skirt of the Givenchy original.

He was holding the brunette over his head with his arms rigid and his hands around her waist. His head was somewhere in between the thighs that formed a fork above him, enveloped by the skirt.

The girl was doing all the moaning. I didn't blame her. They were both fully dressed, the girl hadn't even taken off her gloves. Somehow, it seemed more entrancing, that way. My mouth was dry and my heart speeded up its beat.

"Serge! Oh my God—Serge darling!"

Her voice was only a whisper, but it sounded clearly

all through the suite. She was hung up on what his mouth was doing under her dress. The brunette was visible only from the waist down, her top half was obscured by the top of the door lintel between the living room and bedroom. But her hips were squirming, bumping and grinding, as her escort held her helpless above his face.

A sympathetic quiver ran through my loins. I envied my fellow female her enjoyments of the moment.

They call me Oh Oh Sex at L.U.S.T. headquarters. I have a weakness when it comes to the intimate pleasures in life. But I also have a sense of duty. I turned back to the codebook.

The Minox clicked and clicked.

The brunette was babbling silly things by now. Gasps and grunts punctuated her words, with an occasional sob of delight thrown in for good measure. The sweat was standing out at my temples and my hips were moving with involuntary jerks.

I risked another look in the mirror. The brunette had her skirt up to her navel now, and her nyloned legs and bare thighs made parenthesis marks that held a head between them. She was wearing a garterbelt, nothing else. It looked as if Serge had a brown topknot above his blond hair.

Then he swung her away, let her dangle in the air a moment, and dropped her fanny-first onto the bed. She bounced a couple of times and then sat up, stripping the Givenchy original off over her neatly coiffured brown hair. Big white breasts capped with swollen red nipples bobbed heavily to her movements.

I licked my lips, unable to tear my eyes away.

Serge Akonov—I recognized him from the newspaper photos. He was a visiting Russian dignitary in Uncle

Sam country to check Russian security precautions at all the embassy buildings. Now he was stripping down. His black bow tie flew one way, his evening shirt another, studs popping like peas from a pod. Off came his undershirt to show a hairy chest, layered with muscle tissue. I blinked at that build. He *must* have been a weightlifter, at one time!

The brunette leaned forward from the edge of the bed, undoing his belt, running the zipper down. Her hands and his met as they pushed his evening trousers and shorts toward the floor.

"Oh my!" the brunette cried.

"Yeah, hey," I echoed softly.

He was a man-man, this one. What the French call *envitaille*. Big where it counts. With a soft cry, his girl friend fell upon him with caressing hands, almost crooning to herself.

I pinched my hip. To business, Eve! This is no time for second-hand thrills. Determinedly I turned back to the open safe. I dusted the codebook against possible fingerprints, then put it back into the safe exactly where it had been. I ran a cloth over the safe dial. I closed the safe door and shot the sliding panel that hid the safe into its slot in the step table.

Minox tucked into its belt compartment, I rose to my feet. A few steps and I would be at the window, fastening on my suction discs and making my descent.

I took one last look through the open door into the lighted bedroom. Or at least, it was meant to be a last look. What I saw froze me to the carpet.

The brunette was bending forward, presenting the big blonde Russian with her derriere and widespread thighs. Serge Akonov was thrusting into her in that dog fashion, taking her savagely. I saw the big breasts swing

and sway to each push, I heard the sound of their conjoined parts. Serge stood with his eyes squeezed shut and his mouth open as he pounded pleasure into his girl friend.

But it was not this that made me go rigid.

It was the sight of a girlish hand sliding into a pocket of the tuxedo jacket the Russian had been wearing. The brunette was bringing out a small black book, gripping it between forefinger and second finger, the way you might hold a playing card to sail it through the air.

She turned to look back at the man.

His face was thrown back so his closed eyes faced the ceiling. His mouth was wide open and his breath sounded like a forge bellows. His hips drove back and forth so swiftly, they made a blur.

He could not see the motion of her hand, nor did he glimpse the little black book sailing out of the room, through the doorway to land inches from my foot. Then the woman raised herself slightly and gave herself over to the delights of the flesh.

I put out a toe, I nudged the book.

Ought I open it? Take it with me? I bent down, squatting on my hams. I sent a glance into the lighted bedroom. Serge was drawing the girl backwards with him to the edge of the bed. He sat down, keeping her with him. Her stockinged legs were draped over each of his rock-hard thighs as she faced away from him, hips jerking, crying out harshly in her pleasure.

Her eyes were closed, too, by this time. So I opened the book and glanced through it. It was in Russian. I can speak and read that language, but what I saw made no sense. Whatever this notebook contained was in some kind of code.

One thing I did understand. Three numbers.

20. 14. 21. They leaped off the page and hit me right smack in the eyes. This was the combination to the step-table safe. But why did the brunette want this combination? Was she after the codebook, too?

It put a different light on things.

I could leave now, walking down the stone wall, or I could wait until the girl tired Serge out and he fell asleep. She would come in here, she would open the safe, she would take out the notebook.

And then what? Did she want to photograph its contents as I had done? Or would she steal the codebook itself? I did not want that to happen. If the Russkys realized L.U.S.T.—or any other organization, for that matter—had broken its code, the code would be changed. And all my work this night would have been for nothing.

No, I did not want the brunette to steal the notebook.

I would have to stay and stop her.

I wondered how long I would have to wait before Serge Akonov would fall asleep. I had instant entertainment to help me pass the time, of course; all I had to do was look through the door into that lighted bedroom. The only trouble with that was, the entertainment was getting to me; I wanted to be part of it, too. And that was out of the question.

To while away the time, I got everything ready for a fast getaway. I put suction discs on my knees, slid them up my arms. I raised the window slowly so I could duck out fast. From a compartment of my belt I lifted a small hypodermic filled with a go-sleepy-bye solution.

The sounds in the bedroom went on. Serge was grunting thickly and the brunette was sobbing hysterically. I tiptoed closer.

The big blonde man had the girl perched upon him,

her legs wrapped about his middle as he walked up and down the room, supporting her with his huge, hairy hands on her buttocks. I sighed, staring. Sergy-boy really liked to work at his fun, first holding her over his head and now this. Oh, well, there's no accounting for tastes.

I shrank back into the shadows, taking my eyes away from that living tableau. It was easier to wait here in the darkness and not see what went on in that bedroom. Just listening to the sounds they made was bad enough.

Bedsprings creaked, then began a steady pounding as Serge and his girl friend played at zig and zag. I glanced at them out of the corners of my eyes. She lay on her side, her stockinged legs bent up to her breasts while the big blond Russian lay behind her and at an angle. I gulped. This was a variation on the manner which the Roman writer, Martial, spoke of as a favorite posture of the lady Phyllis. In the Arabic countries, this method of copulation is known as the *neza el kouss*, the rainbow arch.

They shifted position again. I realized what the brunette was trying to do; she wanted to exhaust him so he would fall asleep. When he was snoring, she would come in here and make her try for the codebook. Her plan was a good one. The only trouble with it was, Serge Akonov was no ordinary man. He took what she had to give and returned it with such generosity that the brunette was almost passing out herself.

Once she slid from the bed and ran across the room naked, breasts shaking wildly, to fetch a bottle of Smirnoff vodka. Serge bellowed in glee at the sight of it. He tipped it to his lips and finished off the fifth without taking the neck of the bottle from his mouth.

He hooked the woman by her soft thighs and dried

his mouth on her flesh. He chuckled at this—it pleased some primitive sense of humor in him, I suppose. When he felt his lips were dry, he lifted her, with his hands under each thigh just above her knees, and lifted her up across his loins.

Serge Akonov was ready for action again.

I was ogling them openly, by now. I had forgotten I was the lady from L.U.S.T. and that my case officer, David Anderjanian, was waiting for me to make a rendezvous with him and turn over the Minox with its precious film. I was just a wanting female, jealous of all the attention the brunette was getting.

The big blond man was taking her in the Oriental *yumba-ee* position, squatting on his haunches with the woman spread wide and half-lying across his knees. From that he swung with practised ease into the *purushayat*, in which he lay flat on his back while the brunette crouched above him. Then he rolled her over on her belly and without breaking contact, speared her in the *coitus a tergo* pose.

I have no idea how much time had elapsed. I was beginning to think he would never be done with his pussycat playmate. Then, when I was almost tempted to forget the whole thing, I heard him groan and mutter.

"I think that is—enough for now," he mumbled.

I waited, watching the brunette lift her naked body from the mattress on which Serge Akonov lay stretched, breathing heavily. She slid to the edge and sat there, studying his features. Apparently she was familiar with his habits, because there was a satisfied look on her face as she waited for that sign.

The sign came, I assume, because suddenly she was on her bare feet and walking toward the darkened living

room. I stepped into darker shadows, though I knew her eyes, used to the bright lights of the bedroom, would be as good as blind in this blackness.

She bent over, unwittingly showing her smooth white buttocks to my eyes. She had a body Venus herself might have envied, did this brunette woman. I had seen it in transports of bliss, quivering to the forceful heaves of the big Russian, shaking all over as delight fed her every sense.

At any other time, I might have used her to relieve the itch in my own flesh, but frivolity had no place here. I'd already wasted more time than I should have in this room. Just as she was straightening up, I stepped forward.

I swung the edge of my hand in a karate chop for her right temple. Not too hard, or I might have killed her. I just wanted to put her in dreamsville for a few hours. As my hand slammed into her, she gave a choking sound and her knees bent.

I was about to put the little black notebook into my belt when I got a better idea. I got out my little Minox, opened the notebook and began taking snaps. I would have a bonus for David Anderjanian, my case officer.

When I was done, I slipped the notebook into the brunette's hands. When Serge Akonov woke up, he would find his brunette bombshell lying here, sound asleep. Of course, he would have to wake up before she did, or, all my trouble would be wasted.

I walked boldly into the bedroom.

There was an electric clock on the night table. I set it to ring ten minutes from now, and pulled out the alarm. Serge Akonov would wake up, he would go looking for his pussycat playmate, and——

Poor pussycat!

I ran from the bedroom, through the living room. I stuck my backside out the window, clamped first one knee-cup and then the other to the stone wall. I closed the window. I could not re-lock it, but I felt confident that nobody would pay any attention to it, especially as there was a sheer drop of over a hundred feet to the pavement below.

Pressing against the stone wall, I began my descent.

It was easier going down than it had been coming up, maybe because I had the force of gravity on my side now. *Slurp, slurp, slurp*, and I was halfway down; a few more *slurps* and my right foot touched the top of a stone wall that bordered the garden attached to the embassy building. I dropped over the wall, onto the sidewalk. One glance up and down the street showed it was deserted.

I ran with one elbow scraping the wall so I could stay in the shadows. When I reached the corner, I turned right and ran along the wall for another thirty feet. Then I planted my spine against the cold stone and waited.

A car turned the corner, a Toronado with David Anderjanian driving it. I gave a big sigh of relief, sagged a little, and then stepped into the pool of light from a streetlamp as the Olds pulled in to the curb. I opened the door, got in, and let the back of my head drop onto the head-rest.

"How'd it go?" David asked, easing the car from the curb.

"Good. I got a free sample, I think."

I told David everything except some of the more esoteric details of how Serge Akonov had made love with his girl friend. David listened quietly.

"Good girl," he complimented me, and patted my thigh.

His hand felt good. My flesh was still charged with the sights and sounds of the night, but I was too tired to respond the way I often do when David pats me like that. I just shivered and closed my eyes. I wanted a bed, but I also wanted to be alone in it. I lifted his big hand and put it back on the steering wheel.

David Anderjanian is a big blond Viking of a man, six feet four and just as strong as Serge Akonov, I am sure. We have a thing, David and I. We turn each other on real good. But not tonight. So I just lay there in the blackness of my closed eyelids and let him drive me to my apartment.

I live good, as a L.U.S.T. agent. What the hell! The pay is fantastic, but so are the risks you take, earning it. So in between assignments I live like a queen, in a duplex job in the East Seventies. The rent is ridiculously high, but I like luxury. As the car braked, I opened my eyes.

"I'd ask you in, but one thing would lead to another," I murmured, reaching for the doorknob. "So I'm going beddy-bye all by myself, David. See you sometime after I get about twelve hours sleep. Ta-ta, honey."

I drew the mink coat, which I'd left in the car while I went wall-walking, around the Drum chassis and stepped out onto the sidewalk. I sleepwalked through the thick glass foyer doors, nodded like the sleepwalker I was to the attendant, and let the elevator carry me up to the fifth floor.

I walked into my apartment and headed for the bed. I fell face-down on it and I didn't even take off the mink coat. I drifted off to sleep thinking about what might have happened in the Russian embassy between

the brunette and Serge Akonov while David had been driving me home.

The Drum eyelids lifted at three o'clock next afternoon only because somebody was knocking down my apartment door. I fell off the bed, got up, still half asleep, and staggered through the living room to fumble around for the doorknob.

David Anderjanian was there, bigger than life.

"Honey, I'm going to pin a medal on you. Know what you've done? No, I can see you don't."

He stepped in and closed the door behind him. He grinned down at my half-closed eyes and my body that swayed from side to side with the langorous aftermath of deep slumber. His hand caught me, drew me toward my big modernistic divan.

"You'd better sit down for this one—because it'll knock you off your pins if you don't."

"Yeah," I managed brightly.

I fell onto the divan and immediately let my eyes close. I think I actually slept a few moments before David woke me by shaking my left leg.

"Eve, listen! You know what was in that notebook you told me about? Eve? Eve, dammit! Listen to me."

"Uh-huh. I am, David."

"You are like hell. I ought to push you under a cold shower, that's what I ought to do. Matter of fact, maybe I ought to get in there with you."

I opened one eyelid, letting the other one go on sleeping. "In a *cold* shower with me? Darling, I didn't know you cared."

"I care—and so will you when I tell you. Honey—you're going to put your grubby little paws on five billion dollars!"

That did it. I opened my other baby blue and stared.

Chapter TWO

We looked at each other for a second or two.

My tongue moistened my lips. I asked, "Did you say five *billion* dollars? Or is this all some kind of dream?"

"No dream. Fact. You see, Serge Akonov knows where there's buried treasure."

"Oh my God!" I muttered. "Not that old chestnut. Are you putting me on, David Anderjanian?"

He grinned like a cat with a fat little mouse under one paw. "These are art treasures, jewels, gold bullion. It's a Nazi hoard."

I sat up a little straighter. I had heard of how the Nazis, just before the Americans and the Russians closed in on Berlin, had spirited off a lot of loot. I had also heard how General Rommel, the Desert Fox, had also hidden plenty of bread that he and his Afrika Korps had taken from wealthy homes, from museums and from banks, in his sweep across the North African sands.

"Ah, that reaches you, does it?" David chuckled. "Okay, then. Here goes. I didn't get any sleep last night—I'm not a sissy like you. I took your camera down to headquarters and turned the film over to our experts.

"The codebook was everything we thought it would be. You did a great job on that, honey. But the little notebook—the private property of Serge Akonov—contained a little code all its own. It took one of our cryptographers only an hour and a half to break it.

"Akonov told us that he knows where the Nazis hid some of their ill-gotten loot, somewhere in the waters off what used to be Carthage."

"Rommel and the *Afrika Korps*."

"Yeah, that's right. Or I guess it is, judging by where the stuff is hidden. He gave coordinates, just enough to make us positive that he knows what he's talking about."

I stirred restlessly. "Look, David. These Nazi treasure hoards are a kind of modern-day fairy tale. There are three of them I know about, yet nobody's found anything worth as much as a plugged nickel so far."

There was the hoard which a Corsican diver claimed to have found in a harbor off his island home. A few days later, he was murdered. Back in 1943, when the *Afrika Korps* was getting ready to get out of Africa, General Erwin Rommel packed up half a dozen crates filled with a hundred million dollars worth of jewels, artworks and gold. He sent them off to Rome, to be relayed on to Berlin.

Rome was under attack in those days, by the Allies. So the crates had to be put aboard a fast coastal patrol boat and sent to meet a Nazi convoy off the shores of Corsica. The patrol boat made it to Corsica, then got itself sunk by a couple of dive bombers.

This treasure supposedly lies in a Corsican harbor today.

"That's one story," I told David, and went on talking. Lake Toplitz is in Austria, near Bad Aussee. Its bot-

tom is covered with boxes containing the art treasures, jewels and gold which the Elite Guards took with them when the Nazi world was falling down around their ears. These Nazis got as far as Lake Toplitz in their flight to escape the Russian armies. They dumped their load into the lake.

In recent years, the Austrian government had instituted searches for those lost valuables. Under heavy military guard, divers have probed the lake bottom with a typically Teutonic thoroughness. They found nothing.

"Or maybe they found something and never told the world about it," I said, smiling up at David.

He was scowling blackly, listening to me.

"All very well. Maybe there are other Nazi treasure hoards," he snarled. "This notebook says there is a treasure. I'm not sure how Akonov found out about it. The notebook doesn't say. It mentions a couple of names. It also gives certain coordinates."

"Look, if there really is hidden treasure in a Carthaginian harbor, the Russians would have gone after it. If Akonov knew about it, that is."

"Why? Would you tell Uncle Sam if you found a hidden treasure?"

"Only at income tax time, honey. But I'm no Russian, and those guys believe in share and share alike, you know?"

"Maybe not. This Akonov is quite a playboy. We have a dossier on him. He likes vodka and vice, not necessarily in that order. He gets hung up on women. He's an orgy-porgy boy. So much so that if he doesn't mind his P's and Q's, he's going to get sacked by the Kremlin hierarchy."

"Oh? So he keeps the treasure site to himself, so that when he gets sacked, he has something to fall back on?"

"Something like that, yes."

I chewed my lower lip. I asked, "What's all this got to do with me? I mean, if Uncle Sam wants to lay hands on that treasure, let him. And speaking of my Uncle Sam—how come he's so interested in Nazi loot? Aren't we the richest country on earth?"

"It's in gold bullion, mostly."

I sat up straighter. "Huh? Gold bullion?"

"Stolen from the banks in the cities through which Rommel and his *Afrika Korps* travelled. You know all about the gold drain on the country. Back in 1945, the United States owned seventy per cent of all the gold in the world. In the post-war era, before we began giving away money to build up the world's economy, we had close to twenty-five billion dollars in gold.

"Today, we have less than ten billion. And if all the people were to redeem their paper money—based on gold as it is—there wouldn't be enough in Fort Knox to do it."

"And this Nazi treasure is mostly in gold bullion?"

"Over five billion dollars in gold, if Akonov's notes are to be believed. That's real bread, Eve. So much so, that orders have come down that we've got to go after it. As individuals, as L.U.S.T., not as Americans.

"Remember, the American government can't go nosing around in foreign territorial waters. Look what happened to the *Pueblo*. But a private firm with good equipment and the proper information, might lay its hands on that five billion dollars."

David grinned, "And who better to head that underwater diving expedition but somebody named Eve Drum?"

"What's my share?"

"You go on collecting your salary."

"Oh, goody. Well, I always have been too much of a patriot for my own good. Okay, okay. You've won another argument."

"Of course, you'll have to kidnap Serge Akonov first."

I closed my eyes and groaned, "I knew there was a catch to it. How in hell am I going to abduct a Soviet official outside of Russia?"

"To be honest about it, I don't know."

"And even if I get him out, how can I be sure he'll tell me where the treasure's buried?"

"Don't know that, either."

I eyed my case officer dubiously. "You've got to be kidding. You must have some idea about how I can do it. And don't give me the bit about my female charms working. This Serge Akonov has been around. That dish he had in the bedroom with him last night may not be any Eve Drum, but she comes close enough to it to tell me that no woman is going to get Akonov to defect."

David shrugged. "I know, I know. It's a screamer, this assignment. Actually, the General is gambling all the way, sending you after Akonov. Headquarters knows it. But it's the million-to-one chance we've got to take. That gold bullion means a lot to your old Uncle Sam."

"All right, all right. I'm the sacrificial lamb."

I relaxed in a pouting silence. I don't mind tough jobs, none of my assignments have been easy, but this time I thought L.U.S.T. was going a little too far. If it hadn't been for that brunette bed-baby, I wouldn't be in this pickle. And thinking about the girl made me wonder what had happened to her.

I asked David, but he shook his head. No dead bodies of glamorous women had been reported to the police at last count. I sat up straighter on the divan.

"But something must have happened to her," I protested. "Unless she's still a prisoner?" I glanced at David out of the corners of my eyes. "What about our man in the Embassy, that Ukrainian playboy who tells us what goes on behind its walls for a healthy chunk of American currency? Maybe he knows."

"Could be," David nodded. Then his voice sharpened. "You got an idea?"

"Well, if she knew about that notebook Akonov had—and I'm assuming he must have guarded it with his life—she must know a lot about him. Any Achilles heel he might have, a weakness or two, even a scandal out of his past. David, I need a wedge to spring him out from behind the Iron Curtain."

"Makes sense," he muttered. "Tell you what. I'll contact Headquarters and see if they can get in touch with him."

David went to the phone. I went to the bathroom, stripping down my black body stocking as I walked. I felt dirty, grimy. I'd been too exhausted last night to take a shower, but I was going to make up for it now.

I pushed the black cotton past my hips, catching a glimpse of myself in the mirror. I was all bare skin above my thighs, and black body stocking below. As I thrust the garment down, more and more of the real Eve Drum came into view, breasts bobbling gently, thighs shimmying.

I blew a kiss at my naked pelt, giggling.

Then I went in to take my shower.

Half an hour later I emerged from the steamy bathroom with a thick Cannon towel wrapped about my nudity. David was sitting in an easychair, tie loose, shirt collar open. He makes himself to home in my pad, does David.

"Well?" I asked, tightening the knot in my towel.

"You may have something. Our Ukrainian phoned with the information that there is an execution arranged for this afternoon. A lady with brown hair who answers to the name of Magda Kallay is to be drowned this afternoon in Long Island Sound."

I hopped around excitedly. "When, David? How can you sit there like that? We've got to save the poor thing."

David watched the way my girlish globes bounced loosely under the towel. I stopped hopping and re-tightened the towel knot. He yawned. I kicked him in the shins with my bare toes and he laughed.

"Just testing," he chuckled. "I'm glad you still love me. But about this Magda Kallay. They will drive her in a limousine—under full diplomatic immunity, of course, and with Madame Kallay drugged and helpless—to a marina just beyond Glen Cove. She will be assisted into a boat by the two men with her, as if she were drunk. She will be taken out to the middle of Long Island Sound and dropped overboard with a lead weight attached to her ankle."

"Ugh," I shivered.

"Yeah," David agreed. "However, there will be a helicopter not far away that will swoop down, bomb the boat and——"

"Hey! Is that safe? I mean, what will our Iron Curtain buddies say to such high-handed treatment?"

"They won't be able to prove a thing. They won't even ask a question. They know their killers must take their chances on getting away with the execution. It's part of the game."

"I suppose I'll be in the helicopter?"

"And me. We'll have scuba gear and an inflatable plas-

tic bag to counteract the drag of the lead weight. It shouldn't be too hard a job."

I glanced at the Seth Thomas on my mantelpiece. As if he read my thought, David said, "We have plenty of time. The limousine hasn't left the Embassy yet. You'd better put a swimsuit on, and a dress over it."

The scuba gear would be in the helicopter, I gathered.

In a hour we were on our way toward the airport where L.U.S.T. keeps its Piper Cubs and its helicopter fleet. There would be the pilot to navigate the plane, and David and me for the rescue operation itself. I was not looking forward to the task ahead; the waters of Long Island Sound are colder than a witch's tit in this early springtime of the year.

We got into the 'copter, finding the air tanks and mouthpieces and flippers ready to put on. I wriggled out of my Kay Windsor A-line, while the pilot lifted the whirlybird upward into the air. I figured if he was going to look at the Drum body in a two-piece bathing suit, I'd rather have him do it close to the ground. His eyes ran greedily up my pale thighs to the tightness of the bikini around my hips, and up to where my breasts spilled out above the halter. The pilot sighed.

I pushed my feet into the flippers, and David helped me set the harness for the oxygen tanks more comfortably about my shoulders. It was a little awkward sitting there with the Healthways tanks between me and the chair-back, but I had to be ready to let go and drop at the first warning.

The chopper drifted across the sky. Below us, sunlight glinted on the waters of Long Island Sound, with only a Comet class sailboat and a small cabin cruiser visible.

David was talking into his communicator.

"At the marina, right . . . and half carying the girl, as if she were drunk . . . getting into a Chriscraft in-board Ski Boat . . . mahogany plank hull, natural finish. . . . Roger. Over!"

He put the walkie-talkie down, nodding to me. "They're heading this way, right enough." His hands lifted a pair of binoculars and he began scanning the water to the south.

There was a silence. Then: "Yes, got it in focus . . . two men and the girl. She seems drugged, lifeless. They're fastening something around her ankle. Looks like a lead weight. Guess they're just going to push her overboard and let the lead ball carry her down. Eve, brace yourself. Jim, I'll want you to zero in on them when I yell."

The hired killers in the ChrisCraft would never push the brunette over if they knew we were watching. We were pretty far off, just a dot against the skyline; the killers would have no reason to suspect us. David wanted to give them elbow room to commit themselves.

"All right—go!" he yelled suddenly.

The Hughes whirlybird veered off course, as if sliding down a ramp. The pilot gunned his motor and we skimmed the waves.

"They've seen us, they've got the girl half over the stern."

"Well, let's hurry it up, for God's sake!" I screeched. "A dead dame won't be any good to us—and I need time to operate."

David ignored my outburst, but the pilot said soothingly, "They may not push her over if they see us coming this fast."

"They did! There she goes," David yelled.

I put a hand on the door, lifting off the seat. We were

moving fast, low to the water. I made out the splash, marking the spot.

The chopper craft came closer. Closer.

I shoved open the door and leaped, feet first. I hit the water hard, but the weight of the oxygen tanks gave me added ballast. Just as the waves closed over my head, I heard rifle fire rattle. The men in the ChrisCraft were shooting at the helicopter.

If they brought the chopper down, I was a sitting duck!

The cold waters closed over me. I flipped over and headed bottomward by kicking. I could make out a dark lump ahead of me: the brunette. She was still alive, she was jerking her arms and kicking with her one free leg.

I zeroed in on her, and grabbed the chain that held the lead weight to her manacled ankle. I yanked the inflatable plastic bag free and fastened it to the chain. Then my finger pressed the button that automatically inflated the bag with helium gas.

Instantly, her downward drift was halted.

I grabbed her face, withdrew the oxygen mouthpiece from between my lips and thrust it between hers. She seemed to understand what I was doing, and gulped at the oxygen gratefully. All this while I was holding onto her and kicking surfaceward with my flippers.

Would the ChrisCraft be up there, waiting for us?

All the killers had to do was turn their guns against us; we would be helpless, bobbing about in the Sound waters. I think I was colder from thinking about what might happen when we broke water than from the early spring chill of that same water.

I could not delay to take a look. Magda Kallay needed air badly. I lifted her, and both our heads popped into

view at the same time. Magda clung to me, her arms like cables, as I stared around at the rippling water.

The ChrisCraft was speeding toward us. Fast.

But the helicopter was coming up aft of the boat. I could see David Anderjanian leaning out the open door, his hand gripping a round object. His arm lifted to throw it. As the sunlight touched the thing, I recognized it for a hand grenade.

The chopper craft swung above the boat. David yanked the pin, waited—and hurled it straight down.

The world blew up in front of us.

The ChrisCraft seemed to fly apart. There was a deafening blast, the hull blew sideways and backwards. The forward part, the prow, leaped straight upwards and flew through the air. At me.

"Down!" I yelled.

I dropped backwards, dragging the brunette with me. Water closed over our heads just as a big black shadow—that was the prow of the motorboat—slapped the water over our heads.

Magda struggled, half drowning, but I tugged her sideways and out from under the prow as the forward half of the ChrisCraft started to sink. Again we surfaced. I gagged a little, seeing parts of human bodies floating not too far away. I told myself not to be an idiot; if the grenade had not killed them, they would have killed me. As they had tried to kill Magda.

I held the girl with one arm and waved a bare hand at the 'copter. David waved back. My legs went on kicking, to keep us above water as the chopper slid a path in the air to come about toward us.

A rope ladder fluttered from the open door. I ignored it; I was too busy picking the lock of the lead weight fastened to Magda's ankle. She could never go up that

rope ladder with the ball still fastened to her. Luckily, it was a simple lock mechanism. It yielded to a sliver of steel I had brought along with my scuba gear for just such use.

The whirlybird settled slowly. I caught the lowest rung of the rope ladder and held on as I pushed the lead ball away and watched it sink. I asked Magda Kalay if she could climb the ladder now.

"I don't know," she panted. "I feel all washed out. My clothes are so heavy—soaked with water—I'm not sure I can make it."

I caught the zipper of her dress and yanked it down, seeing a bare white back and a black bra strap. I tore her Givenchy dress off her shoulders, down to her hips. She hung onto the rope ladder with both hands as I yanked the dress past her hips and down her legs.

She was wearing a black girdle and nylon stockings.

"Girdle next," I told her.

"But I won't have anything on!"

"You want to live, sweetie?"

"Girdle next," she muttered resignedly.

I stripped her right down to her black brassiere. I left that on because it was a cobwebby thing that didn't weigh any more wet than dry. Then I hunched down, got a shoulder under her soft behind and heaved.

She put a bare foot on the lowest rung. With my help, and with the aid of her hands that held the ladder uprights, she went up the swaying ropes. I noticed that David was coming out of the doorway, descending the ladder to give her a hand.

I stared upward as he slipped an arm about her middle, drawing her nakedness against him; then he climbed and Magda-baby climbed with him. Nobody bothered to lend me a hand.

When I slid my dripping wet head through the 'copper doorway, I got a load of David with a big beach towel, rubbing Magda down. He was soothing her with little noises, the kind of noises a father might make to his little girl who'd fallen into a swimming pool with all her clothes on. It was disgusting.

I toweled myself off as the chopper rose upward.

David was saying, "You can stay with Eve here, if you'd like. We want to question you about what happened. You're willing to talk, aren't you?"

"Oh, yes. Of course. Those terrible men! I—I didn't do anything. I just had a date with a man from the embassy and——"

"Not here. Later," David cooed. "Right now, you keep yourself nice and warm. We can't have Operation Rescue Magda Kallay strike a snag at this late date."

The brunette was surprised. "You know my name?"

David looked at her right breast where the falling towel bared it. He said, waving a hand at me, "Eve and I are United States intelligence agents. Ever since last night when you ran into Eve, we've had the boys working on your background."

"Oh," she murmured, glancing at me, automatically touching her temple where I'd chopped her last night. I could not read her brown eyes, so I did not know whether she resented my having belted her.

By way of offering an olive branch, I said brightly, "Sorry about that. Line of duty and all that jazz."

She gave me a faint smile. I gathered I was forgiven.

Her warm brown eyes honeyed up at David. She did not lift the fallen towel, letting him see how big and heavy her pale breast was. Maybe she figured she could get more out of my case officer than out of me.

"I'll be glad to tell you anything you want to know.

All I ask is a little protection. I don't want to go through that bit again." She shivered. I did not blame her.

We dropped down onto the tarmac, and climbed out of the Hughes 'copter and into the Toronado. Magda sat up front beside David; me, I sat in back. By myself. I noticed that Magda gave David Anderjanian all her attention. She kept tying and retying that towel knot. Apparently it kept coming undone, to judge by the fast glances David was giving her body.

I did a slow burn, wet and uncomfortable under my Kay Windsor. If I hadn't been on assignment, I'd have made David let me off at the nearest taxi stand. I gritted my teeth and hung on, thinking up ways and means to annoy them both.

In the elevator, Magda opened the towel a moment, to settle it more comfortably about her. David gawked. I had seen those long, shapely bare gams last night, and the gentle mound of belly, the brown forest between her thighs. But David was a newcomer. Magda flashed a toothy smile between her full red lips as he stared.

"I hope you don't mind my getting comfy," she cooed.

"Not at all, I want you to!" he enthused.

"I'm glad," she syruiped back at him.

I rolled my eyes. I mean, how crude can you get?

Somehow, the towel had come up higher as a result of its latest knot. As we walked along the corridor, it rode up to the lower part of her white buttocks. David stared at the jiggling flesh, these rolling hips, the striding legs, with something like white heat in his eyes.

I unlocked my apartment door and stepped back so they could precede me. David put his hand on the small of her back, urging her through before him. As she stepped over the sill, her hips brushed him, down low, where he was up high.

I never fight City Hall. I let David carry the ball. All I did was set up my TEAC stereo recorder for their use. Then I plumped myself down on a hassock to get the Kallay story.

David grabbed a footstool and sat on it right in front of Magda, probably because the towel hiked back on her thighs so he could see up it to where her brown hair grew, if he wanted. And he wanted. Oh, my yes. With everything he had at full power.

"I—I guess you could call me an adventuress," Magda began.

Well, that's one word for it.

"I've been a call girl in my time, but I couldn't see where that was getting me anywhere, so I branched out. I knew a few men from the foreign embassies in Washington and New York, most of them connected with the United Nations. I hinted about maybe they'd like to know what my other boy friends were doing. In a diplomatic way, of course."

What else?

Her smile was that of a fallen angel asking forgiveness. I writhed when I saw how David was eating all this up, with his eyes running back and forth between the pallid inner thighs our Hungarian-born visitor was opening and closing every so often.

"They were very interested. They thought they were the only ones on my list—that is, each one thought I was spying only for him. Just lately, one foreign country—I won't mention the name—got wind of the fact that Serge Akonov knew where to find something they wanted, very much."

"The Nazi treasure hoard," I announced.

Her brown eyes darted at me, instantly. I think she had been going to make up a fairy tale for us. She fig-

ured she would not tell us the truth, that she would keep a secret like that for somebody willing to pay a fortune for the information. Me, I just wanted her to know we weren't both complete idiots, no matter how David was acting.

Magda smiled at me, suddenly. Apparently she thought better of telling us lies. "Yes, that's right, I see you know."

"We want to learn if Akonov suspects that Miss Drum was in his suite last night, too," David murmured smoothly.

Her eyes widened. "Certainly not! I am positive of that. He suspected only me. He took me downstairs to a cellar room where he roped my wrists together and was just about to whip me when I told him what he wanted to know.

"I admitted that I'd been hired to steal his little notebook because my employer suspected that he knew where the Nazi treasure was. Oh, my! I thought he would kill me, he got so angry. I began to suspect then that he was playing a lonely kind of game. I knew why he had taken me downstairs by himself. He was afraid of what I might blurt out to his fellow countrymen—the fact that Serge Akonov knew where there was a hidden treasure."

David glanced at me, nodding. This confirmed his own thoughts on the matter. Maybe it also gave me the wedge I needed to spirit muscle-boy out from behind the Iron Curtain. If Akonov wanted that gold bullion for himself, he might be willing to make a deal for a couple of million dollars worth of it, with our side.

Magda was toying with the towel hem. "It was a very bad moment for me, hung up naked by my wrists, and Serge with a whip in his hand. We were in a sound-

proof room. He could have beaten me to death, you know—with diplomatic immunity."

"He didn't," I pointed out. "Or if he did beat you, he didn't leave any marks on your body."

She nodded. "No, he didn't whip me. He had another way to punish me," Her eyes downcast. "Perhaps you will understand when I say he used his—club—on me. From behind." Her brown eyes lifted to stare at David. "It—hurt me—very much."

"*Venus aversa*," I informed David.

"I know, I know," he snapped.

"After several hours of this torment, he stuck a needle into me. I passed out. I have been out ever since, until they pushed me into that cold water. It revived me."

She sat back, sinking deeper into my divan. I shut off the recorder and waited for David to comment. I guess he was too busy looking at the brunette to do much clear thinking at the moment. Anyway, he was silent, but his eyes walked all over her body.

"We'll have to keep you in seclusion for a while, Miss Kallay," he said at last, frowning. "And under guard. You can stay in Eve's apartment. She's not going to be here."

"What kind of guard?" she breathed, eyes dancing.

"Let's say—a personal bodyguard. Me, for instance."

"I would enjoy that," she smiled.

Maybe she would. I would not. I said, "Now, look. Fun's fun, but this apartment does belong to me. I pay rent. I keep my things here."

I was going to add that I didn't want any floozey wearing my clothes and using my bubble bath and climbing into my underwear, but David gave me a long, cool stare. I gathered that he didn't want me to spoil whatever he had in mind by spiteful girl-talk.

"Tell me about this Akonov," he said to Magda.

She shrugged, endangering the grip of the towel on her heavy breasts. "What's to tell? He likes his love-stuff with an athletic twist. Carrying me around the room, sitting on him, holding me over his head so he can—taste me."

Her brown eyes glowing, she added, "He is a very strong man. Very strong."

"What does he drink? What kind of clothes does he wear? Does he gamble? Get drunk? Where does he live in Moscow? What are his habits?"

Magda pouted thoughtfully. "Vodka. He loves vodka. Drinks it out of the bottle. Straight. Gahhh! He loves fun. Any kind of fun. Driving a fast car—he owns a souped-up Moskvich—swimming bare-ass in the places he can get away with it. He was born almost forty years ago in the Ukraine. Served as a private in the last world war. Very young at the time, and very proud of the fact, now.

"He lives in Moscow. Every so often he takes trips like the one he's on now, in New York. He works maybe an hour each day and spends the rest of his time carousing around. Girls like me. Good fun. His hired hands. He always says he lets off steam this way."

"After each trip, he goes to some Black Sea resort—Sochi, I think it is—where he rests up for a week or ten days before reporting back for duty. Says it's to recharge his batteries. And they sure need it, if what I go through with him is any sample of his normal conduct.

"What a man!"

I began to look more kindly upon the way David was ogling Magda Kallay, because I was thinking about Serge Akonov. If he was half as much a man as the brunette seemed to think him—and my own opinion

coincided with hers, since I'd seen him in action last night—inspiring him to defect to the West might be fun. He'd enjoyed a lot of women; no ordinary bed-mate could seduce him from his duty.

Me, I'm no ordinary bedmate. I'm Oh Oh Sex. It was like a challenge, a gage to bed-battle cast down before my feet. It was a voice begging me for satisfaction.

The mere thought of the big blond Russian was exciting me, just as the sight of those pale white thighs was arousing David as Magda let them spread a little, sitting so lazily on the divan. She was very careless about the towel. It was hiked up so I could see all the curve of one thigh and part of an unclad buttock.

From directly in front of her, my case officer must have had an even better view, because all of a sudden he cleared his throat and said, "Eve, why don't you go to bed? I've made arrangements for you to fly by direct Pan American flight from New York to Moscow. It's a long trip. You'll need your rest."

I wanted to reach out and clobber him. Here I was in my own apartment, being sent to bed like a child. What was even worse, he was getting ready to ball this brunette who had already been given her intimate injections only last night.

Me, I had gone without. I was hurting.

"David, how'd you like to go to hell?" I snapped.

He started, studied my flushed, angry face for a moment, then grinned. I guess he decided that for once I was going to get what I'd given him from time to time, the short end of the stick.

"Eve, I'm your superior. I'm *ordering* you beddy-bye."

My hands clenched into fists. David would pay for this. By God, he would. I didn't know when or how—only that he'd suffer as I was suffering right now.

Head high, I marched into my bedroom, slamming the door behind me. I yanked off my dress, undid my swimsuit halter and pushed down the panties. I stared down at my rigid brown nipples, standing up as in protest at their neglect. I sighed and wriggled my hips, squeezing my thighs together.

In the next room, I could hear David Anderjanian talking to the Hungarian woman. I tiptoed closer to the door, gently opened it a little.

"———should hear more about this Serge Akonov, you know. Anything you can tell me about him will be appreciated."

"Well, he's big," she murmured.

"Oh? I'm six feet four. I weigh two-twenty."

"Not that way. You know. As a man."

"Hmmmm. If he's so big, maybe he'll hurt Eve."

"I don't think so," came the female voice, cattily. I could have scratched her eyes out. "Nobody is *that* big!"

I put a hand on the doorknob, about to go in and tell her to flake off, that I'd had enough of this chit-chat, and I wanted to hit the sack. Then David spoke and I let my hands cramp about the knob.

"Why don't you make comparisons?"

"Anything I can do to help," she whispered coyly.

I heard the rasp of a zipper.

I closed the door. I damned David Anderjanian under my breath. I staggered into the bathroom, trying not to think of what was going on in my living room. I got into the shower. I turned on the cold water.

Russia, here I come. With lust.

On guard, Sergey-boy!

Chapter THREE

Next morning, I woke up to the warm coziness of a naked body cuddling my own. I blinked and turned around. Magda Kallay was curled up beside me, sleeping. She didn't snore—I give her that much.

The doorbell rang again. I reached for a wrapper and toddled out to answer it. David Anderjanian stood there, a big grin on his face.

I said, "Get lost."

His foot blocked the closing door. "Come on, Eve. We have no time for games. Akonov's leaving on the three o'clock flight from Kennedy. We want you in the air by that time."

"You do, do you? Well, it may just interest you to know that I don't intend to pack and——"

His forearm brushed me aside. Two women in uniforms came marching in. David waved a hand at them. "Your packers. You just tell them what you want to take with you. All you have to do is get dressed. Oh, yes—and listen to me while you're doing it."

His helpers swung into action like the well-trained members of L.U.S.T. that they were. I admired their

deft handling of my precious Van Raalte slips and Olga brassieres, Scandale corselette and Taffreda panties. They held up dresses for my nod, they had my Wings luggage opened all over the damn suite.

Once Magda wailed that she could not sleep with all the commotion going on. It made my day for me. I even hummed while slithering my curves into a pair of Sapphire panties.

David was yakking all the time. It was like pulling on your unmentionables in the middle of Grand Central Station, with the movers walking here and there, packing my frillies.

"If you get to Moscow before Akonov," David was saying, "you'll have the jump on him. No need to tell you what that means. What do you know about geometric art? Structural repetition? Arithmetical symmetry? No matter. You can read up on it, on the flight. It's modern art forms, you know: minimal art and algebraic permutations, modular composition, that sort of thing."

"You've blown your mind," I sighed, rolling my eyes.

"No, no. Listen, Eve. This is urgent."

I was standing in the doorway of the bedroom in my Cantreze liquid stockings, garterbelt, Pappagallo shoes and miniship. I had my forearms crossed before my number 38s, nipples and all. When David gestured, I reached for my Olga and strapped it on so the lady movers shouldn't be too shocked.

I sat down beside David. He lowered his voice so only I could hear him. "You will be a girl guide for an exhibition of modern American art. Big cubes and geometrical forms, all that sort of thing. It's already in Moscow, for a display in one of their museums. All you have to do is pretend you know all about it.

"The catch is this: there are weapons hidden inside some of those art objects. I'll give you a run-down on them as fast as I can, but in case I can't cover it all, there are blank pieces of paper as bookmarks in the books you're taking with you to read on your flight."

"Heat those bookmarks. You'll see hidden writing. Memorize what you see. Those bookmarks will tell you what weapons are hidden in which art forms, and how you can open them to get what you need. You may not have to use a single weapon, I don't know. It's just in case you do."

"Yeah, hey," I nodded obediently, taking the books he handed me. Mod weapons in a mod linear yet!

Then he was lifting a dress I'd laid out, tossing it through the air at me. Automatically I caught it and slipped it over my head. David was smiling at a pouting Magda, covered up to her eyeballs in warm covers. I wondered how long it would take him to crawl between the sheets with her after I was gone.

"Okay, coach," I said, turning my back so he could zip me up. The girl movers were on their way out with my luggage. They would turn it over to a L.U.S.T. chauffeur downstairs who would carry it to the limousine taking me to Kennedy.

The zipper ran up its teeth.

I grabbed my Coblentz handbag. "I'm ready."

David bent and kissed Magda on her nose. Then he caught me by the elbow and muttered, "You don't mind if I don't come out to the airport with you, do you, honey? I really do have other business to keep me busy."

"Don't give it a second thought," I carolled.

And kicked him in the shins.

I left him bent over, hopping on one foot and howling in pain. I slammed the outer door and marched down the corridor, feeling that I had avenged my honor. To some extent, at least. The rest would have to wait until I hit Moscow.

The limousine whirled me through city traffic and out toward the airport. I used these more or less private moments to heat the four bookmarks with the flame of my gold Ronson lighter. I studied the art works, I noted what weapons were to be found in each one.

I opened my eyes pretty wide when I came to the bookmark that told me about the big geometrical metal pieces called primary structures. Inside one of these anti-art forms was a flying rocket belt. You know, the straps with the jet tanks like the kind Buck Rogers used to use in the comic strips. The rocket belt is a reality today. It is manufactured by Textron's Bell Aerosystems Incorporated, and has a range of about nine hundred feet.

After memorizing their contents, I burned the bookmarks with my cigarette lighter and deposited the ashes in the car tray.

When the limousine pulled up at the Pan Am terminal, I got out and walked into the main waiting room, leaving the chauffeur to attend to my luggage. I gave the clerk my ticket and watched him go through those mysterious motions of weighing baggage and stamping papers by which I would be permitted to board the Boeing 707. I was handed a blue and white bag, the kind awarded to all first-class passengers.

This direct-to-Moscow flight has only recently been instituted by Pan Am. I felt that it had been put into operation just for me as I strolled across the field toward

the big jet. In less than ten hours, I would be walking across Vnukovo Airport in Moscow.

I found my seat, settled myself comfortably, and got ready to be fed. Having worked for the League of Underground Spies and Terrorists long enough now to know when I am well off, I really enjoyed these flights, dull as they might be. The excitement would begin soon enough.

After finishing a martini and a steak-and-salad dinner with coffee, I thought about Russia and its tourist trade. Ten years ago, less than half a million foreigners visited the Soviet Union. Today, more than a million and a half visitors offer their passports for approval, and twenty-five thousand and more of these are Americans. As a result, every hotel in Moscow is booked to capacity, and new hotels are being built all the time. I was checked into the Rossiya, the newest hotel of them all. It is a step and a jump from St. Basil's Cathedral, so I would be right in the middle of the action.

There is not the go-go action in Moscow that you can find in London or Paris or Rome. The big things to a Muscovite are his circus, his ballet, and his opera. The Moscow Art Theater is reputedly the finest of its kind in the world. If you like flowers, there are five botanical gardens to visit. There are more than a hundred museums for the culture vulture. And the Moscow subway, with its mosaic tilework and marble sculpture, is in itself a work of art.

More than five million people live in Moscow. Two million more commute from its suburbs to jobs within the city proper. The girls wear their version of our miniskirt, the *mini-yubki*. Some of these femmes are very

glamorous, but the great majority are rather beefy, according to western standards. The men—well, they are no fashion plates, except for a very few.

However, in the past couple of years, the Soviet Union has turned its attention to pleasing its people, to giving them the modish clothes, the cars, the refrigerators, all the things in life that we Americans take for granted. As a result, the people are emerging from a gray cocoon of bland living into the brightly tinted world of competitive enterprise.

Reflections for a rainy day, I thought. As the Boeing jet emerged through the low clouds above the airport, the rain beat down with liquid fury. In the black sky to the west, I saw a yellow vein work of brilliant lightning, as if I were being welcomed to this city on the Moskva river.

The Rossiya is the largest hotel in the world, with accommodations for over three thousand people. My own suite was pleasant, airy and light, with an attached bath and a roomy bed. I began unpacking as soon as my luggage arrived.

My instructions were to contact Serge Akonov upon his arrival, but frankly, I had no way of doing this at the moment. In the Tretyakov Gallery, the mod art display was being set up. I was the guide for the display. I had to be on hand to try and explain abstract impressionism and non-self patterns. As I draped a sheath dress over a hanger, I told myself that maybe the mountain could bring Mahomet to it, instead of vice versa.

Akonov had a weakness for women. If he heard about the new girl guide at the *Amerikanski* art display, he might be intrigued enough to come and see her. Once he did that, the rest would be up to me.

I decided to wear my mod-mod clothes, micro-skirt and all, plus a stitched fedora. The micro-skirt showed off my legs right up to my upper thighs. They would be a sensation in Moscow, where even the most daring girls wear the comparatively modest *miniyubki*. The only thing I had to fear was arrest for indecent exposure, but I figured maybe the fact that I was a visiting American would let me get away with it.

In this get-up, I went down the elevator to the main lobby. I drew eyes like mad, eyes that ran up and down the Drum gams to the hem of the short-short skirt as I waggled hips for the front door. I heard a few gasps, a couple of admiring words from a man, then I was out on the wet-slick sidewalk. The rain had stopped by this time, so I decided to walk.

I went three blocks before I discovered that I was the head of a parade extending from my heels for about fifty yards behind me. Men and women were staring at my get-up, but mostly at my legs. I have good legs. I like to show them off.

I heard feet beating my way. A Moscow cop.

He drew up, huffing and puffing. His face scanned my attire, and he tried not to grin as he took in my legs.

"Miss," he began in halting English.

In perfect Russian, I asked, "Yes? Is there something wrong?"

His face beamed. He could make himself understood. "Your clothes are very indecent," he confided, making a vague gesture at my curving upper thighs.

"Indecent? I beg your pardon! This is my *uniform*."

He seemed stunned. "Uniform?"

"I am the hostess for the American mod art display

at the Tretyakov Gallery. Naturally, with mod art I must wear a mod dress. *Da?*"

The man blinked and looked around him at the faces of his fellow countrymen, at the beaming features of the men and the disapproving looks of the older women. The young women, those of my own age, were openly delighted, both with my clothes and with my courage in wearing them.

Seeing that the officer did not want to mar international relations by arresting me, I eased him out of his dilemma.

"Perhaps I should wear the uniform only when I am in the gallery?" I asked, making my eyes big and my voice wistful. "Perhaps I should wear a coat, back and forth?"

"*Da, da!*" he exclaimed. He was thinking, let the art gallery police worry about this mad *Amerikanski*, at least it will be out of my hands.

I hooked my arm in his, smiling up at him. "Would you escort me to back to my hotel, please? That way, it will seem you are doing your duty, making me get off the street in this uniform which you consider so indecent."

He radiated happiness. We turned around and side by side, led the parade back the other way. I kept looking around, hoping to see—ah, there! a young man with a camera. He was wearing out shoe leather racing toward us.

He was from Pravda, he panted, showing his credentials to the officer. He would like to take a picture of the American girl in her American mini-skirt.

"Micro-skirt," I corrected. "A mini-skirt is longer."

He wrote words in a small notebook. Then the officer and I posed for several shots. Between takes I explained I was wearing this mod dress because of the type of art exhibit that was being held at the Tretyakov Gallery. It was to be considered a kind of uniform.

Then the parade went on, to the Hotel Rossiya.

I sat back then, and awaited developments. Actually, I went to bed and slept for about eight hours. When I woke up, I got dressed in an evening gown the skirt of which swept my shoes, and dined in solitary luxury.

I also bought a copy of Pravda.

My picture was splashed across the third page, shapely gams and all. There was a write-up that told the Muscovites that this would be my uniform at the art gallery. Drily, the writer added that there might be as many people going to see the girl guide as there would be to see the abstract impressionistic paintings and the cubist carvings.

How right he was!

Next morning I wore a trenchcoat that came an inch above my knees as I made my way to the gallery. I attracted stares—my Vaumon beret and my Highlander chamois-colored coat were modish enough to do that, without the sight of my micro-skirt beneath the Highlander hem—as I sauntered along Gorki Street. When I got to the Tretyakov Gallery, I was happy to see lines of people waiting to be admitted.

The people burst into speech as I approached. They can spot a foreigner in Moscow without much trouble. If they are at all in doubt, they look at your shoes. My Papagallos told them all they needed to know.

"The girl guide—the American woman."

"Nice legs."

"You'll see more of them inside. Be patient."

I flashed them a smile and waved. They all waved back, laughing. I guess it was to be a kind of holiday for them.

I asked the doorman where the American display was, and followed his directions until I came to the wing assigned to me. I must admit the art display company had done it up brown. Big blocks of stone and metal—called primary structures—were cube by hectagon alongside painted plywood "presences." On the wall were those big-eyed, lonely children made famous by Walter Keane, while below a giant Calder mobile stood flanking graphics in varying colors, the abstract calligraphy of Pollack, and new realisms by Thiebaud, Segal and Porter. It was a mass of art and anti-art.

My job was to explain it all. Fortunately, I dig this kind of thing. I understand that these modern-day artists reach deep into the soul and delve within the mind for their inspirations. To them, tradition is passed off and scorned as tedious before the splash and fury of pop and op art. Still, to understand it is one thing; to explain it, quite another.

The people began filing in, finding me in my micro-skirted uniform, eager and ready to dissertate on a Calder mobile or the expressionist bent of a Whitelaw. I discussed the interplay of images of a David Hockney and the projecting planes of Charles Biedermann. The blank faces before me told me better than words that I wasn't getting through to them.

They were very polite. They listened. They even asked a few questions, and were obviously delighted that

I could answer them in their own language. Once an Army officer shook his head and sneered derisively.

"It is ridiculous," he told me. "Utterly nonsensical."

I smiled politely. "It is a revolution," I told him. "Like your own. You changed a way of life, so are these artists. It is all a part of the wild new wave. It is a breaking with tradition and habit."

He blinked at that, looking thoughtful. He said, "It could be. I have not thought of it in that regard. A revolution, yes. Something completely different from what we have known."

Serge Akonov came after lunch, alone, and striding like the vibrant animal he was, into the wing which the gallery officials had so kindly loaned for this American art display. His eyes were all over my legs, and his face was mildly flushed—I supposed, with vodka fumes. He came to a halt before me and a bit of madcap optical art by Robert Hudson.

"So," he nodded. "You are the girl guide all Moscow is talking about." His eyes danced with glee. "You are not wearing any uniform. It is the way the chic girls dress back in your United States."

He spoke English so the other visitors could not understand him. I folded my hands and asked plaintively, "You aren't going to give me away? I thought it might be a good publicity gimmick."

"Give you away? Don't be silly. I admire you."

"Thank you," I answered demurely.

"I admire you so much, I would like to see more of you."

"There isn't too much left to see," I giggled.

"The most important—ah—parts," he admitted, "are covered."

He was a swinger, this boy. He was no stodgy Marxist. He had been around the world, in all its great capitals, and he ran with all of them.

"I haven't been to the Kremlin's Armory Museum, nor even to the Metro, your subway. To say nothing of the Bolshoi Ballet," I announced. "I'd like to see them."

People were clearing their throats impatiently about us. Serge Akonov looked down his nose at them, sighed, and turned back to me.

"I shall send a car for you. What time are you off duty?"

"Five o'clock."

"It shall be then. The car—a red Moskvich—will be outside the main entrance. The driver will be at your command. The only limitation I ask is that you dine with me."

"At eight? In the Rossiya dining room?"

He made a little bow. I watched him walk off with a faint frown. I had made the first step, I had a date with my quarry. My next task was to get him to defect. I began to think about that even as I resumed talking to the visitors about a sculpture in motion by William Kluver.

Serge Akonov held a high position in the Soviet hierarchy. He would never defect for a roll in the hay, even with little old me. There had to be another way, a way I had not thought of, as yet. But I would, I told myself, moving around the wing of the Tretyakov Gallery. My Uncle Sam wanted me to, and that was enough for me.

At five o'clock I slid into the red Moskvich with a display of thighs under my pulled-back trenchcoat that made the driver blink before he closed the door. Like master, like servant?

"Is Comrade Akonov a great patriot of Russia?" I asked, settling back and crossing my stockinged legs.

"*Da, da,*" the driver murmured.

"He would take me to the museums? To St. Basil's Cathedral? I ask because I am not accustomed to standing in line, and I notice that Comrade Akonov ignores these lines of patient, waiting people as if they do not exist."

A thick chuckle was my answer. Then: "He is an important man, Comrade Akonov. Though he is a little too frivolous at times." He gasped as if he had said too much, but I reassured him.

"I was wondering what to wear tonight. If he is not such a serious man, perhaps I can wear a rather daring evening gown."

"He likes pretty women in evening gowns. Modest ones—in public."

By the time the red Moskvich pulled up in front of the hotel, I felt that the driver and I were good friends. I cemented our friendship with a tip of ten rubles, which amounts to a little more than an American dollar. And I'd changed my mind about my gown.

I dressed for my dinner date in a ruffled white organza by Donald Brooks, with Hanes pantihose and white Joyce pumps. I figured I would be as demure as the most prudish Russian would want, in this outfit. Of course, the dress was short by Moscow standards, but you can't have everything. You see, I can take a hint.

Serge was quite prompt. At exactly eight, the doorbell rang. I rustled to answer it, and found my date in evening clothes. He beamed at the sight of me, so I suspected he had thought I might embarrass him with

a mod-mod outfit. Chalk one up for my side! I held out my hand for his.

"We shall feast on suckling pig and then stroll about Red Square," he told me, advancing into the room, studying it and nodding his approval "I want you to see the red stars light up on the Kremlin Towers and listen to the *kremlyevskiye kuranty*, the clock chimes."

"I'd adore to," I breathed.

He held my velevt evening cloak for me to slip into, then escorted me down the hall. When the elevator operator bowed his head to him, I decided Serge Akonov was quite an important personage in Moscow—a fact, which would make my task all the harder. No man gives up power such as he had. Not willingly, anyhow.

We ate a dinner fit for a czar. We began with sturgeon garnished with slices of lemon and gelatin, and continued with a salad of vegetables and cold meats. Our main course was roast suckling pig served on a bed of boiled buckwheat groats. I was all but bursting when they brought in the crepes suzettes. There had been a dry white Tsinandali wine to go with the fish, and later, the pig, and a bottle of vodka.

I was almost looped by the time it came to stand up, so I clung with a little more than normal force to Sergey-boy. He was big and strong. Up this close and in more or less direct contact with his muscles, I could sense how solid and hard they were.

"You do lift weights, don't you?" I asked as he practically carried me along the floor with him.

His laughter boomed out. "When I was young and stupid—*da, da!* Weights. Big iron things. When I grew older and got some sense, I substituted soft weights for those."

"Soft weights?"

"*Da*—women!"

I smiled to his Gargantuan guffaw. He lived good, this Comrade Akonov. He liked rich food, fine wines, strong vodka, and weak women. His hand patted my behind as he urged me toward the lobby doors.

"We shall walk for a while. It is good for the digestion. As we stroll, I shall tell you all about Moscow. It was founded in the twelfth century by Yuri Dolgoruki as a trading post. For about a hundred years it was a village of log huts surrounded by a wooden wall. Then Alexander Nevsky's son united the duchy of Moscow, and began to modernize the city. The red brick wall was put up two hundred years later. This is the same wall you see today surrounding the Kremlin, which means a walled fortress in our language."

He spoke of the Cossacks, who had won Siberia for Russia and then defied the Turks in Constantinople. He explained how the Mongols under Genghiz Khan and his successors had taxed all the Russians and how, later, the Russians had united under Ivan the Great—not Ivan the Terrible, mind—to defeat and cast them out. It was the Cossacks again, in the Ukraine, who defeated the Poles at the battle of Piliava, and pushed them out of what is now Russia.

He was an engaging speaker, and held me spellbound. I *looked* at the red stars on the Kremlin towers when they lighted up, and *aahed* at the sound of the clock chimes. Serge Akonov must have practiced this speech a long time ago. He was able to get a good idea of my behind, my breasts and my belly by gentle little pats and touches while spouting on about Peter the Great and

how he modernized his country, turning it westward instead of to the East and China.

I guess he liked what his fingertips and his palms told him about the Drum body. He began to get restless after a while, and history soured on him.

"There are no nightclubs in Moscow, or anywhere else in Russia, for that matter," he informed me. "It is a very prudish country, you know."

"So I've been told."

He coughed behind an upraised hand. "However, there are ways and means, even in such an old-fashioned land, to have a good time."

"Oh? How is that?"

"We have parties, we officials. To these little orgies, we invite pretty girls. Such a girl as you would raise a lot of excitement. You would like to attend such a party, *da?*"

"Indeed I would—I think." I touched his face with my eyes, hoping for a reaction to my next words. "Aren't you officials supposed to be above-board and models for the people? What I mean is, won't you get in trouble if you have these orgies?"

He laughed nervously and I decided maybe I had something. If I could get Serge Akonov into enough hot water, he might be willing to defect of his own free will. I could not rat on him; he might find out. I would have to put on my thinking cap and work something out in detail.

So I hugged his arm and whispered, "Come on, tell me a little something about these orgies. Vodka and girls, I'll bet. Do the girls take off their clothes? Do you enjoy them in front of everybody else? Do they get very drunk and do really naughty things?"

"Come back to my apartment with me this night, and I will tell you all about them," he chuckled, squeezing my arm and using his bulk to turn me and walk me away from Red Square.

I played coy. "I really shouldn't, you know. I'm just a girl guide who has a job to do tomorrow. I don't want to give a bad impression."

The hand on my elbow was a very powerful one. The voice in my ear cajoled and coddled. "Just a drink, no more. Nothing naughty. Not tonight. A drink and a little talk. What could be more innocent?"

"Plenty of things, lover boy," I giggled. "I really would like to take in that party. But not tonight. Day after tomorrow, the art exhibit will be closed, so I have a free day. If you could work up an orgy for tomorrow night, I'd be happy to attend."

He nodded soberly. "I shall have to be satisfied with that, I suppose. Tomorrow night is such a long time away! You are sure you will not relent about this evening?"

"Sorry, I just can't. I'm a working girl."

And I was working right at the moment, though Serge Akonov did not know it. I was playing him as Isaak Walton might have played a fish. I was displaying the proper shyness while at the same time admitting that I wanted to be in on the orgy kick. His face was ludicrous in its disappointment.

So I gave the line a little tug. I said, "Why don't you come up to my room long enough to sip a vodka while I get into something comfy?"

Enthusiasm erupted in his voice as he murmured, "I would enjoy that very much. But we would be ever so

much more private in my room. *Nyet?* There would be no curious eyes to see us, no gossiping tongues to waggle."

"Oh, if you're worried," I said hurriedly, "we can have our nightcap some other time."

His deep chest puffed out. "What, me worried?"

"In that case, come along," I cajoled.

The Hotel Rossiya is not far from Red Square. We made it in about twenty minutes. Holding hands, we walked into the lobby, which was so crowded that nobody really paid us any mind. We took the elevator to my floor.

Once inside my little suite, I filled two glasses with vodka and ice. To mine, I added a little canned lime juice and soda for a vodka rickey. Serge took his liquor straight.

I went into the bedroom and shut the door.

I had a special camera with me that could be operated by an electronic impulse. I propped it up on the dressing table so it would face the opened door. After I had rejoined my Russian boy friend, it would snap our picture when I pressed the special ring I would be wearing which emitted the electronic impulse.

There was no harm in jumping the gun, I figured. If I could catch Sergey-boy in a compromising pose with me here in my room, I would be one up on the game. Tomorrow night there would be a chance to snap more films.

I got the camera in place, covering it with a pair of filmy panties so that the lens poked out of the left leg-hole. I was wearing a simple diamond solitaire; more jewels than this would not have been appropriate with my white organza dress. I would need a covering dis-

guise for the electronic ring, so I got out my jewel case and browsed through it.

When I was wearing four rings and several braceletes, I slipped off my dress and walked across my bedroom clad only in a bra, my Cantreese stockings, Joyce shoes and a black and red garterbelt. I lifted out a transparent length of harem pajamas from a hanger in the clothes closet. To wear these properly, I had to remove my bra.

I lifted off the brassiere so my breasts jutted naked, then slipped the thin harem pajamas over my near-nakedness. I twined a couple of big-headed necklaces around my throat. I added lipstick to my mouth and stared at my reflection. You could see the inner sides of my jiggling breasts under the sheer pajama panels.

I looked like a floozey.

Maybe Serge Akonov liked floozies. I sure hoped so, because I was counting on him to get his big animal body in a couple of poses with Eve Drum that would not only raise a few eyebrows in the Kremlin, but would cost Akonov his job.

I switched off the lights in the bedroom and opened the door. The camera lens was aimed at my behind. I walked out into the living room.

Action! Lights! Camera!

Chapter FOUR

Serge Akonov all but swallowed his glass when he saw my nearly naked body in the almost transparent harem pajamas. He gulped, he spilled vodka out of both corners of his mouth, his eyes watered and he damn near choked to death. I do have an effect, at times.

My reflection in the wall mirror told me he had good reason to slobber his Stolichnaya. My red nipples were visible under the twin panels that formed the upper part of the pajamas. Where the pajama trousers met at the thighs to widen into loose pants legs, there was a golden triangle. You could also see my legs through the trousers, and my navel under the hip-hugging belt.

"Careful, Comrade," I warned.

He dabbed his wet face with a handkerchief, while his eyes prowled the Drum body from scarlet toenails to golden coiffure. He was a man who rose to an occasion; right now he was rising like a satyr at the sight of a running nymph. His stare went from one conversation piece to another on my torso, finally settling in at my *colombe de Venus*.

He put his drink down, took off his coat, and unbut-

toned his shirt. As his tie went flying, I asked, "What in the world are you doing?"

"I am going to copulate with you, Comrade."

Damn direct, these Russians. Remembering my camera, I decided I didn't want it any other way. I shrugged a shoulder, making sure the pajama panel dropped down my upper arm to my wrist, exposing my right breast. It hung ripe and heavy, like a fruit waiting to be eaten, quivering like jelly.

His shirt came out of his pants. His belt loosened. His pants went down. He was breathing like a foundered horse, and from the looks of him standing there in his shorts, he was hung like one, too. I gulped and tried to play it cool.

"Really, Comrade, don't you think you're taking liberties? I mean, after all, I only met you today."

"You appeal to me. You make me excited. It is enough."

I ran my forefinger around my electronic ring as he pushed his shorts down and bounced out of them. *Click!* This would make a pretty picture for the Presidium to look at when it came time to turn over my evidence to the authorities: party boss Serge Akonov, displaying himself to a capitalistic cutie who was still wearing her clothes. In living color, yet.

He came for me like a bull for the matador's cape. I gave a little yell and turned to flee but he hit me in the thigh, and then his arms closed around my softness, and his mouth was slobbering all over my neck. I wriggled back against his third arm, and found it was very solidly muscled.

"Easy, easy," I panted.

Thinking about his excitement got me drooling a little, too. It does things for a girlish ego when one is

wanted so determinedly. For a moment I thought he was going to plunge right through the thin stuff of my harem pajamas, but he settled for a gentle, rubbing motion that we both enjoyed.

One hand was over my right breast, the other was sliding beneath the thin panel still covering my left. Then he had hold of them both and started playing beanbag with them. The soft white flesh oozed out over his big, hard fingers, and shook ripely as his hands toyed with their soft fleshiness. I began panting, too. I was remembering David Anderjanian and Magda Kallay, and telling myself that now it was my turn to return the compliment.

I half turned toward the big blond Russian. I hooked his neck with my arm and drew his lips to my open mouth. We clung shaking in that intense embrace for long moments. I bit his tongue, caressingly. I shook to the play of his fingers at my nipples. I also pressed my ring when his lips dropped to my rocklike breasts. *Click!*

Then Serge was raising me, his hands on my hips, kissing downward from my nipples to my soft belly. *Click!* Up I went until my head brushed the ceiling, while his head brushed me where I do my thing. The camera would not get me above my bellybutton, but it was a perfect study of Serge Akonov *fait minette*. *Click!*

He dropped me down his front, he turned me and pushed me toward the floor. I caught wise. I was palm-down on the rug, suspended with my legs tucked under his armpits as we slipped into the wheelbarrow position. *Click!* I began to walk around the room, carrying him along with me. Out of camera range, I gave myself over to some solid enjoyment, wriggling and panting while I handwalked.

Then I angled my arm-stand until we were back near the open bedroom door. *Click!* I lifted my left hand, put it on his left ankle, placed my right on his matching foot. I was practically standing on my head, but Serge was right there with me. *Click!*

Fortunately, my body is trained for active participation in such fun things as judo, karate, savat, leaping, running, jumping, swimming and even love-ins. So I went right along with this inventive Lothario. I urged him on, I twisted my body into suggestive poses which gave him ideas as to how best to exercise his libidinous talents.

We formed the *purushayut*, that Hindu way of love-making in which the man reclines and the female mounts above him. From this we swung into the *pauspaus*, where we lay side by side, Serge's thickly thewed legs locked about mine as we churned away in the *rikibel-adho* movements so prized by the Hindus. We even had a go at *udhiteh*, in which both of us are standing, with Serge supporting one of my legs.

Click! Click! Click!

I was getting pretty exhausted by this time, in that delicious state of satiation the French name *faire sa merde*. Even Serge was slackening his pace, growing slower and slower as we slid from *panipash-asana*, in which we both sat facing one another holding onto each other's feet, into the tortoise posture, where each of the male's members such as hands, feet and mouth, touch the corresponding parts of the female.

"Never have I know a woman like you," he muttered, releasing his hand hold on my hips, letting me slide to the floor.

I smiled up at him. He was quite obviously worn out

with *follier* fatigue. I thought this might interest his fellow party bosses. *Click.*

Then he folded up, sitting on the sofa. The nape of his neck rested against the sofa-back. I almost felt sorry for him.

"You want to stay here, go right ahead," I told him, clawing myself to my feet by hanging onto a chair. "I'm going beddy-bye."

Stark naked, I staggered into the bedroom. My harem pajamas, ripped and torn beyond recognition, lay in a pool of sweat-wet transparency where Serge had torn them from me.

I paused only to slide the camera into a drawer and cover it with my black nylon panties. Then I fell across the bedface-down, and slept.

I woke to the alarm clock shrilling, just like any other clock-watcher. I moaned and rolled over, burying my face in the pillow. I couldn't breathe. So I turned onto my back and glared at the ceiling, realizing I was on assignment, that I was the girl guide for the American Art Display. This meant I had to be at work on time.

So I got up and dressed, after a cold shower.

Serge Akonov was gone, so I left, too. I swallowed hot chocolate for breakfast, since Russian coffee leaves much to be desired. I walked to the museum, reminding myself that I had a date for an orgy about eight to-night.

I got through the day aided by a couple of quick cat-naps when nobody was looking, curled up on a flat length of metal called *Eternal Mood* behind a towering primary structure (that hid the light from my eyes) named *Disinterest*. I felt better at the end of the day than I had at its beginning.

I hit the bed when I entered the apartment, setting the alarm for seven-thirty. I was going to dress quite simply, just an evening gown and shoes over the Drum nudity. So I slept like an exhausted baby.

I was wearing my black satin gown with nothing under it, and high-heeled evening pumps, when Serge rang my doorbell. Oh, yes: with the help of my Revlon mini-makeup, Touch and Glow, and my Fiery Frostling lipstick, my face was a smooth perfection, my blonde curls gathered in an upsweep and held by a small, jeweled comb. Serge was ready to take up where he had left off, extending his arms to grab me in a bear-hug, but I slithered my carcass out of his clutches, shaking a finger at him.

"If we hold our own orgy, there won't be anything left over for the real thing," I simpered. "You're just too much man, honey."

He beamed, accepting the compliment like the gentleman playboy he was. "It is true, what you say. I am quite a man."

With that settled, we left in his red Moskvitch for a private apartment in a Moscow hotel. The chauffeur gave me a knowing wink. There is, as I have said, no go-go night life in Moscow. If your interests do not run to the ballet or the opera, you just can't score for entertainment unless you know somebody like Serge Akonov and get invited to a private pad. There, the Russian sky is the limit.

Every once in a while somebody blabs, and the authorities raid such a love-in lodging. The newspapers are plastered with names of bigwigs demoted in rank for such capitalistic capers. The guilty people shrug and take their medicine; the ones who have not been caught

with their larks showing go on carousing around and about.

The apartment into which we stepped was right out of a Czarist palace. If you are lucky enough to be admitted to one of these sex soirees, you will have your eyes popped by the lavish profusion of gilded walls and painted ceilings, by the thick Turkish rugs on the floor and the heavy Brussels draperies depicting pastoral scenes along the Volga river. The furniture is massy, elegant, and something out of an earlier time. Paintings in heavy gold frames and statues by master sculptors add their touch of luxury to the men and women in the big, airy rooms.

Russian women are either dowdy—or breathtakingly beautiful.

The women and girls in the apartment were gorgeous. There were blonde Slavs from the Ukraine, pink of skin and flushed with youth; dark-haired damsels from Balkaria; oriental girls—Yakuts and Kalmyks—sleek and lithe in westernized clothes. There are a hundred and seventy-five different peoples inside the Soviet Union, speaking a hundred and fifty different languages. These include Great Russians, White Russians, Germans, Kazakhs, Turkomen, Kirghiz, and so many others that not even the Russians know them all.

The lovely women of their world flock to Moscow and Leningrad, and to the coastal resorts like Odessa and Sochi. The party bosses had gathered about thirty of the prettiest femmes they could find, here in this apartment, dressed them in their finery—originals by Gali Gagarin and Vyacheslav Zaitzev and Taisaya Kuchinskaya—and were parading them against background worthy of their beauty.

The scene did not look like an orgy. Everyone was fully clad, they were chatting and laughing, sipping cocktails or vodka on the rocks. The men, some of whom wore military uniforms, were well dressed and extremely polite. Honestly, I felt a little disappointed.

Where were the fireworks?"

"Soon, soon," promised Sergey-boy as if he understood my mental question. "First we must study one another, eh? To make light conversation, to get to know the man or woman with whom we will be more familiar a little later on."

He made sense. It is always more intimate to make love with someone you know, rather than with a perfect stranger. You remember the person fully dressed, casually chatting or sitting quietly, and against this mental daguerreotype you see bared flesh, a lustful contortion of body and limbs, the clenched teeth of an orgasmic moment. It is refinement in roguery.

I accepted a Stolichnaya vodka on the rocks. I sipped. I joined in the conversation between a general and a girl with long black hair and brilliant black eyes, named Nadja Kubzok. She wore a mini-length silver dance dress with pearls sewn across its bulging bodice, and elbow-length white gloves.

From time to time a waiter—I noted casually that one of them had a scar down the side of his face, that another was almost cherubic with smooth pink cheeks—paused to proffer a tray filled with drinks. I drank sparingly; I am not a vodka fancier; but the men and girls around me belted them down like they were water.

We talked about a half a dozen different things—the trouble Russia was having with China, and the necessity to maintain a standing army all the way from Vladivostok to the Pamir Mountains. I learned that Manchuria,

Mongolia, and Sinkiang province are the special hot-heads of potential trouble between the Soviet Union and Red China.

"Mao Tse-tung claims we robbed China years ago," snorted Serge Akonov, "by making treaties with weak Chinese emperors."

"And by military conquest that took Kirghiz and Kazakh away from them," added the general.

"Now they claim we've taken over Outer Mongolia," murmured Nadja with a sober look, nodding her head grimly, "and that we intend to steal Sinkiang itself away from them."

"It is ridiculous," growled Serge, "but typically mad Maoist thinking."

"Let's talk about something more pleasant," I smiled.

Nadja nodded. "Yes, that is a good idea. While you're in Russia, Eve, you must take a trip to Leningrad and see the Hermitage, our answer to the Louvre."

The scar-faced waiter held a tray containing small *blini* pancakes, which you were supposed to wrap around sild herring, red Amir caviar, black Astrakhan caviar, sliced salmon or sliced sturgeon, all of which were piled high in silver dishes. I chose salmon.

As we ate and swallowed more vodka, the general murmured, "Peter the Great began it, in a sense, because he built the city of St. Petersburg, which we call Leningrad. His daughter built the Winter Palace, which forms part of the five buildings of the Hermitage. There is a theater and a palace, as well as the museum sections."

"He began the collection of masterpieces by purchasing sculptures, paintings, tapestries, from France, Holland, Italy," Nadja added. "His daughter added to them after she commissioned an Italian architect to construct her Winter Palace. But it remained for Catherine the

Great to bring art appreciation in Russia to full flower."

"Catherine built the Hermitage itself," Serge informed me, "as a retreat to which she could retire and enjoy the world's finest paintings at her leisure. As a matter of fact, she bought so many paintings that she had to build another museum just to house them."

Over the years, the czars and czarinas enlarged those early collections. These masterpieces were only for the enjoyment of royalty until the middle of the nineteenth century when, if you were given an invitation card and wore evening clothes, you were admitted to the royal halls to stare at the works of Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, Rubens and all the other old masters.

The general public was not admitted until after the Russian Revolution. Upon learning that, I began to understand why the Russian masses go in so much for art, the ballet and the opera; they have never until this century been permitted to partake of the cultural things of life. It made them more likeable, somehow—like children pressing their faces against the window of a candy store, finally admitted to partake of the delights inside it.

There are over three hundred exhibition halls in the Hermitage, and you must walk fifteen miles to see them all. But you will be rewarded by such sights as the Small Throne Room, with its velvet walls and silver emblems, the magnificent Gallery of the 1812 War, the green radiance of Malachite Hall, where everything is formed from that semi-precious stone mined in the Ural mountains, including fireplace, tables, columns, walls and other furnishings.

There is the Flemish hall with its giant paintings and

its immense candlebra that makes a big man look like a dwarf, the Sevres porcelain vases in the French wing, the art treasures of the Scythian nomads dating back seven centuries before Christ.

"My own favorite is the Danae by Rembrandt," Serge said. "Its golden glimmer enchants me."

The general chuckled, "I prefer the Fragonards. They——"

A girlish squeal interrupted him. He turned to stare at a redhead whose dress was up to her bellybutton, high-kicking a tray out of the hand of the cherubic waiter. Glasses, vodka and ice cubes went flying. Shapely legs in dark stockings warred with flying glass and her bikini-pantied hips for attention.

Two men caught hold of her, lifting her into the air. They began kissing her soft white thighs, naked above her stocking-tops.

A Kazakh girl wearing the traditional pink dress with velvet long-line bolero of Alma-Ata was giggling as she undid the bodice of her dress and one by one, lifted out her large brown breasts. They protruded naked from her otherwise modest clothing, adding a touch of lewdity that attracted two men to her upstanding violet nipples. She bit her lower lip and her eyes blazed hotly as their mouths fastened to her flesh.

All over the room, the barriers were falling.

An Estonian blonde was slipping out of the skirt of her woolen suit, revealing naked hips in a black lace garterbelt, her legs in nylons. A little to one side of her, a girl with oriental features was disrobing completely, lifting her dress above her head and bumping with her golden hips.

Serge slid a hand around my back, inserting it under the loose panel of my evening gown. His touch was

curiously gentle on my stiffened nipple, almost as if he were afraid to rouse my female heat too fast.

"I like to watch," he whispered in my ear.

He held me in front of him, doing the bit with my soft buttocks, rubbing his excitement into me with the slow back-and-forth pressure of *frottage*. I must say my Russian roué dug all the sex techniques; he never slighted a single one of them.

Frottage is French, for what a masher does in a crowded subway at rush hour, when he moves himself against an attractive lady passenger. If he rubs the buttocks, it is also called *natelism*. Like what Sergey-boy was doing to me, while peering over my bare shoulder at the men and girls carrying on with one another.

In most cases, the *frotteur* will have anxiety symptoms and a fear of genital sex relations. He deviates from the norm by directing his sexual impulses to this form of frication. He may well be bi-sexual, and as a result of his compromise with reality, he gets his kicks from just rubbing himself against a female.

I was not psychoanalysing my Party Playboy at the moment; I knew he had no fear of genital relations with a dame. He was just getting his charge in a different way, is all. And his eyes were staring at what I was admiring, like the naked Uzbek girl doing the frug before a heavyset member of Politburo, or the blonde with the big white breasts shimmying as she went walking up and down the room, bare arms at her sides, palms outward. An exhibitionist, I tabbed her.

"It gets better," Serge whispered. "Be patient."

It was pretty good as it was, I thought. The men were getting out of their clothes and grabbing at equally naked girls. They were kissing one another, fondling bodies, whipping up the old libido to frantic fury.

My companion drew me backward, out of the way of a wheeled table on which was stretched the pale body of a White Russian woman, while a stocky business man moved the table as he himself moved in and out of the moaning woman whose thighs were wrapped about his middle.

"You see all sorts," Sergey-boy murmured.

"Yeah, hey," I breathed, eyes fixed on a grouping of three women and two men.

One man was standing with a girl perched on his shoulders, her privacy pressed to his face. A second girl knelt before him, busy at *pomper le dard*. The third woman lay on her back, straddled by the girl, while the other man clasped her buttocks in his hands and serviced her with a display of erotic activity that made my mouth go dry.

All over the room, since the females out-numbered the males, these little groups were forming. They seemed like erotic statuary, figures out of the imagination of a Franz von Bayros. Hands moved gently over male genitalia as open mouths followed red-tinted fingernails. Lips kissed breasts and bellies and buttocks. Smoothly-fleshed women were taken below and above and side by side with solidly muscled men.

The sounds of love were everywhere, in the mewling cries and whimpers of women being taken to ecstasy, in the hoarse bellows of rutting males, in the slap of naked flesh pounding together, in that liquid sussuration that tells one that *la danse a plat* is being enacted.

My escort had seated himself on the edge of a chair and had lifted my evening skirt. He had drawn me backward so that I straddled the thighs and midsection he had bared by pushing down his shorts and trousers. With my back to him, and with my thighs resting across his,

he began his *tire-bouchon Americain*. My hips responded, my spine arched and curved, I did a bump and grind seated on him.

All around us everyone else was enjoying their *voyage à Cythere* in one form or another. My somewhat glazed eyes swung around the room studying this group or that couple, aware that every single one of the men and women was busy at *nanan*.

Except for the waiters, of course. The man with the zigzag scar on his cheek was standing in an alcove——

He held a camera in his hands and was snapping my picture. On top of Serge. Going at it, hot and heavy. Again and again, he was photographing me. A cold chill ran down my back, suddenly. Maybe I was being spied on. Maybe the KGB was readying me for a trial and a sentence of execution. I would be shot, or sent to a Siberian slave labor camp. Or maybe something worse, like torture.

Then I realized the truth. It was not my picture but that of Serge Akonov the waiter was after. Catching him *flin agrante delicto* on film. Like the way I had done myself, last night.

Suddenly, I got mad. It was all right for me to take his snapshot, but nobody else had better dare. The thought occurred to me that maybe this camerabug just wanted dirty pictures; I understand they're at a premium in Russia. He might have a goldmine in his hands if he could get enough snaps.

The only trouble with that idea was the fact that the waiter was only taking my picture, with Serge Akonov. He ignored the general standing behind the bending Nadja, enjoying her in the *Venus aversa* position. He did not see the five women and four men whose bodies were entangled in a variety of love rites being carried

on all at once. Just Serge and me. I stretched my arms back, locked fingers behind Serge's neck. I clamped my ankles together.

"Walk around," I panted.

Serge walked with me like a figurehead out in front of the ship, curving body bouncing and swaying. It was a little different, but the main thing about it was the fact that I was able to spot cherub himself, also taking snaps of us. Nobody else. Just me and Serge. The star performers.

"Pipe the shutterbugs, lover boy," I whispered.

He grunted, "Don't interrupt me now."

Well, if that was the way he wanted it.

But even as he stumbled and almost fell, as his huge body came closer and closer to its orgasmic release, I saw the babyfaced waiter slide out of view. Maybe he figured he had enough film evidence to suit the most avid prude in the Politburo. He was on his getaway gallop, right now.

Sure, I could let him make off with his pictures. Serge Akonov would be demoted. He would be right where I wanted him. Almost. But if the Russian hierarchy actually caught him with the goods, they might throw him into solitary confinement in some jail, out of which I would never be able to get him. I could not take that chance.

My own pictures I intended as a kind of threat, to induce him to defect. These pictures would do more than that, they would get him in real trouble.

I had to get my hands on those cameras. Fast.

I leaned sideways when I saw a group of three naked woman tangled together, fondling one another. They lay on a divan, long white legs and arms intertwined as

they played with the heavy breasts and flabby forests of their femininity.

Serge fell sideways, right in among them. I twisted away at the last moment. The women whirled from their bemusement with one another's female charms, seeing the male readiness of this gift from out of mid-air. They leaped for Serge, their hands caught him and dragged him down among them.

"Oi," yelled my Russian roué, in surprise.

Then one blonde was pushing a nipple between his lips, another was lifting a pallid thigh above him, sliding down onto his masculinity, while the third woman was pushing the first one out of the way so that she could ride his upturned face.

Serge was not averse to a little variety. He fell to with a will, while I darted off on my bare feet across the room in the direction in which Babyface had gone. I ran fast and silently.

My quarry did not hear me. His back was toward me as he hurried along the hotel corridor, camera in hand. I left my feet in a football tackle, hitting him behind the knees with a shoulder, wrapping my arms about his knees.

He slammed sideways into the corridor wall.

I slid out from under him in time to catch his surprised face with the edge of my hand as he turned it toward me. I took him right across his nose. I cannot break nine roofing tiles with my face, the way Bok Eung Lee can do, but I can smash four wooden planks with the edge of my hand. So when my hand landed across that nose, gristle and cartilage crunched. Blood spurted.

As I knelt there, Babyface crumpled into a sodden mass of unconsciousness. I snatched for the camera. I was too exposed here to ask the questions I needed to ask. I

looked around me. Doors. All locked, I assumed. I tested them. They were.

I reached into Babyface's coat pockets. I found a nailfile, a batch of Russian coins, some folding money, keys. I examined the keys more closely. If this cherub was a spy, this key ring might contain a master key.

No such luck. But his nail file was worn very thin at the business end. I discovered that, with my knowledge of locks, and given the crude Russian variety with which this building was provided, some diligent manœuvering would let me open a door with it.

I opened a door. The bedroom facing me was empty.

"Inside, buster," I muttered, dragging him by an arm.

I flipped him onto the bed, ripped off his clothes, and tore them until I had serviceable lengths of material for tie-strips. I spread-eagled his naked body on the bed and fastened his wrists and ankles to the four postpost.

Then I threw cold water on his face.

He came to with a groan. His nose must have been hurting like hell. He stared at me with wide eyes, made three futile attempts to pull free, then noticed that I had no clothes on, either.

"What's the pitch, mac?" I asked.

He got a dumb look. I explained, "I mean, why were you taking pictures of me?"

"Not you, Serge Akonov."

"Okay, okay. Comrade Akonov, then. But why?"

His face took on a stubborn look. I leaned over and whacked him hard between the legs. He screamed, body flopping as he tried to double up and could not. I smiled at him.

"Talk, honey," I wheedled.

His body was shaking uncontrollably, his face whiter than the coverlet on which he was tied. His lips twitched

and his eyes bulged as they stared at me. I raised my hand again. His legs were spread apart, and he was helpless to stop me from belting him a second time.

"No more, no more. Please!" he whimpered.

There were tears in his eyes. The tears almost hid the expression of surprised pleasure deep in those blue orbs. Then I heard the click of a turning door knob.

I erupted off the bed, whirling about in mid-air.

The waiter with the scar was standing in the open doorway, a gun in his hand. And his finger was tightening on the trigger.

Chapter FIVE

The gunshot exploded in my ears as I flung myself straight forward. I think the waiter in the doorway was so surprised by my sudden action that his hand wavered just enough for him to miss. He had not expected such athletic ability in a woman.

He never got another chance. I had hurled myself forward; I rammed his legs, driving him backward into the hotel corridor. Palms flat on the corridor carpeting, I kicked one bare heel into his throat.

He gagged, his Adam's apple crushed.

I leaped, grabbing for his gun. His fingers went loose in his agony. He could not have stopped me even if he had been less in pain than he was. With his gun in my hand, I grabbed him by an ankle and dragged him back through the doorway and into the room where his partner lay spreadeagled on the bed.

I dropped his foot, then I shut the door.

"Now then," I said to the Cherub.

"Who are you?" he moaned.

"A friend of Comrade Akonov's. Which is more than

I can say of you. Who's paying you to take pictures of him?"

The Cherub shook his head back and forth.

I smiled gently. I do not like to harm a man where he is most sensitive, but business is business, and my trade is spying. I had to know who was behind the Cherub and his partner. If only for my own protection.

So I turned to the window and fumbled at the shade, removing the springy rod from its slot. The man on the bed watched me with bulging eyes. With the wooden rod in a hand, I stepped back to the bed.

"Will you talk?"

His blue eyes begged me, but he had a duty too. His body strutted its muscles as he fought to escape the torn bits of clothing that held him prisoner, but I had tied my knots too tightly.

I brought the rod down across his lower belly.

For a moment I feared his convulsions of agony would shake the bed down, but it held together while his body arched and shook and shuddered. His scream echoed and re-echoed in my ears.

I had realized before now, of course, that this floor must be soundproof, to hide the sounds of orgy from the rest of the building. Otherwise, Serge Akonov and his fellow playboys would never have chosen it. The cherub could screech his head off and nobody would notice, unless some of the girls and boys in the orgy room should hear and come wandering in. But I doubted that.

It was a case of *laissez-faire* between the many men who rented out this hotel floor. If one of them got his kicks by being beaten—as any eavesdroppers would think—well, that was his affair. It explained why the gunshot had not drawn any curious invaders. Every-

body was too busy being orgied to bother about a loud noise that might upon investigation, turn out to have been a champagne cork being freed from a bottle.

I whipped the Cherub about his privacy for three full minutes. I think he enjoyed the idea. Not the pain, although he may indeed have been a masochist—but the idea of being dominated by a female. It appeals to many males. It is a deviation born of a submission to females ingrained into the personality. History has known of matriarchal societies; this is submission carried over into government.

The character traits that involve dominance and submission are concerned with egotism on the part of the dominator, and with a weakness of will on the part of the submissor; and the need to have someone on whom to lean, and the need to give the orders and to take command in any situation. Sexual bondage is not a perversion, according to Richard von Krafft-Ebing, it is simply that the *vita sexualis* is willing to trade obedience in all matters to have love returned and sexual desires gratified. The submissor—he or she—satisfies the selfishness, the egotism of the dominant individual as a price for his or her favors. It is not masochism, though it may often also involve that desire to be pained, shamed and humiliated.

Whether any of this applied to the Cherub, I have no way of knowing. I do know this: he became fiercely aroused as I whipped him, and when I understood that he was about to get his sexual kicks out of being beaten, **I stopped the whipping.**

"More," he moaned then. "More—for God's sake!"

Well, live and learn. He writhed in absolute torment there before my eyes, begging to be beaten. It was his

thing, and I had stumbled on the knowledge completely by accident.

I let the bloodied rod—his flesh was bleeding, here and there—trail across his manhood. “If you talk, I’ll whip. So start.”

He moaned, he bit his lips, he cursed softly. But he said at last, “Boris and I were hired by Alexei Davidoff. Comrade Akonov is his superior. Davidoff wants his superior’s job. If he can convince the Presidium that Comrade Akonov lacks the moral stature to go on being an officer of the Party, the Presidium will name Alexei Davidoff to take the position Comrade Akonov has forfeited.”

“Does Comrade Akonov know Alexei Davidoff?”

“Of course! I’ve said he was his superior.”

I nodded and lashed downward with the wooden rod. The Cherub did not scream; he sighed and arched his pain-wracked body, and suddenly he erupted in a fountain of furious fulfillment. So strong was his reaction that for a few moments he fainted.

By the time he came to, I had gagged him so he could not call for help. The waiter on the floor was dead, choked by the blood that had filled his throat from my foot-blow. Gathering up both their cameras, I ran for it.

The orgy was still going full blast.

I hid the cameras in my evening wrap before I ran back to the divan where Serge Akonov was buried under three female bodies. They writhed and twisted; they were moaning steadily. I watched a pair of female buttocks shake like white gelatin as their owner tossed to the thrill of an orgasm. I studied a pretty face contorted in bliss as sweat-dampened hair hung down about it and naked hips pounded out a surging release.

I waited. I’m no spoil-sport.

Until at last Serge Akonov pushed his trio of bacchantes from him and stared blearily up into my face. I reached out a hand and hauled him to his feet.

"Come on, you. If you want to go on being a bigshot in the Ministry of Information, that is."

He blinked stupidly. "What are you talking about?"

"I can't tell you here. But I can give you a hint. Alexei Davidoff is after your job."

Instantly, he was sober. His big hand gripped my forearm as he swung me about. "Tell me that again!" he rasped.

I did better than that. I brought him with me down the hotel corridor to the room where the cameramen lay. He took one look, and nodded his head.

"Yes. I should have recognized him before—that baby-face bastard is one of Davidoff's tools."

"Care to come with me to develop the films?"

"Even better. We shall go to my place and develop them. In that way, we shall have complete privacy. If those films contain what I think they do, I could be in big trouble should they fall into the wrong hands."

His face was hard, like granite. There was no laughter, no lust for life in his features, now. His blue eyes were agates. I think, were Alexei Davidoff before him, he would have strangled him with his huge hands.

We beat feet out of the hotel and into his red Moskvich. The chauffeur knew his master; one glance at that grim face and he was silent, slamming the door behind us and running around the car to slide behind the wheel. We set records getting to the big stone house on Arbat Street that belonged to Serge Akonov.

I was mildly surprised at the completeness of his dark room. Before he switched on the red lightbulb, I was treated to a dozen large developing trays, several print-

ers, a couple of graduates, dozens of vials of chemicals, paper—the whole shutterbug scene. The Compleat Camerman in technicolor and three dimensions.

“Why?” I asked, as the red lightbulb brightened.

“Why do I develop my own pictures? Because there are certain—ah—subjects I photograph which are my own affair. Eh? Not the affair of someone like Alexei Davidoff, nor even the business of the Presidium.”

“They sound like fun.”

His smile was sly. “You would like to see my personal photo file, would you? Well perhaps, while these photos are developing, we can take a look, you and I.” He paused, then added wryly, “Ordinarily, I would look forward to displaying them to you. Right now, after the orgy and learning how Davidoff is out to take my job away from me, I am not in the mood.”

I shrugged, “All right, whatever you say.”

I watched his hands, oddly deft for their huge size, slip the film from the two cameras and bathe them in the developing trays. He worked swiftly, his long familiarity with his task quite evident. He even hummed a little. From time to time he hovered above the trays, watching, rinsing the films in a stop bath, transferring them to fixing baths where he moved them about gently. Then he washed them in running water.

When he was done he dried the films with a soft chamois cloth and clipped them to fasteners hanging from thin metal wires above the counter. He blew out his cheeks, staring at the photos of himself and me as we were caught for posterity in one personal pose or another.

“This is not a bad one,” he muttered once. “I think I can add that to my collection.”

“Hey, now,” I protested.

"They are not for sale," he exclaimed seriously, turning to me. "They are for my old age."

"Oh, yeah?"

His laughter boomed out. "When I am old, my memory will need a jog or two, you understand? I will look at this picture of you straddling my thighs—with the behind of Nadja Kubzoc in the background—see it there?—and I will say, 'Ah, that was the night the *Amerikanski* girl and I nearly came to grief because of that bastard, Alexei Davidoff.'"

"Mmmmm," I mumbled. "And your other girl friends? Is that why you keep amorous albums of them? To jog your memory?"

"Of course! It is a great compliment for a girl to be included in my collection. Not everyone makes it, you know. Only the very versatile, those who are either well versed in venery or exceptionally beautiful. You, my dear, qualify on both counts."

"Gee, thanks," I muttered.

I admit I felt an imp of curiosity tickling my bump of knowledge. This Russian roué was a playboy of long standing. He must have dozens of such albums. I wondered what his other women had been like. Judging by Magda Kallay and little old me, they must have been something to see. At least, he had good taste.

"Yes, some day when my flesh has lost its strength, I will take out my albums and from time to time browse through them, recalling other and better days. I shall spend the autumn of my years in a cerebral springtime with the aid of memory."

He turned and reached for a key hanging on a peg. Then he went to a counter set against the far wall, inserted it, slid back a door, and brought out a leather-

bound album filled with glossy photographs, all of them eight-by-tens. He handed it to me.

I lifted the cover and found myself goggling at a color shot of a younger Serge and a redheaded woman kneeling before him as he sat in an easy chair. You could not see the face of the woman from this angle, but her waist was slim and her buttocks generously curved. Serge had a silly grin on his face, but there was a tightness to his muscles that reflected the pleasure his flesh was deriving from the lip service the redhead was paying him.

Serge chuckled, staring over my shoulder.

"She was the wife of a man facing trial for a crime," he told me. "She came to me, begged me to save him. She was very beautiful."

"And you saved him?"

"I informed her that we had almost a week before the trial began. If she would be my slave for that week, living in my bed and doing what I wanted her to do, I'd see to it that her husband came back into her arms. I had a very important job in those days. Not as important a position as I hold today, but important enough."

I turned the page. This was a front view of the redhead, also in full color. She was on all fours and facing the camera, her face contorted in delight. Her heavy breasts swung down between her arms. I saw Serge kneeling behind her, his huge hands holding her soft white hips.

"You bastard," I half-laughed.

"She had a good time. Don't fret on her score. I think she liked the idea of being my slave. She certainly acted as if she did."

The third picture showed them in the *soixante-neuf* position. Her thigh hid his face, but you knew from the

manner in which her body was contorted that she was being pleased by his tongue worship. Moreover, she was busily engaged in returning the carnal compliment he was paying her.

"What about the husband?" I wondered.

"Oh, I got him off. There was almost a total lack of evidence against him, anyway. Not that this is always a deterrent to a conviction in Russia, you understand, but if the Party does not press too strongly, sometimes the judges will let a man go. They let him go."

The next photograph showed a very young girl joined with Serge as he stood beside a large wooden bed. She was perched on him, legs wrapped about his thighs, arms about his neck, kissing him with her open mouth.

"Ah, yes. Little Zia. Her father wanted a permit for something or other. She came to see me about it. I made a deal with her, too. She was extremely cooperative, so her daddy got what he wanted. So too, I believe, did she."

I riffled through the rest of the photographs. A story of one kind or another went with each of them. I was getting the idea that Serge Akonov loved his work. It gave him power and a hold on a lot of cute Party pussycats.

His arm was around my waist as I came to the last photo in this album, and he was hugging me against him. My Russian roué was getting back his interest in life and its girl goodies.

So I put the album down.

"I have a lot of them," he assured me, reluctantly releasing my middle. "This is one of the earlier ones. I have others that will make your hair curl. Group stuff."

"A pair of pretty sisters? A mother and daughter?"

He grinned wickedly. "Something like that. You'll love them."

But I was tired, even if he wasn't.

"I'd better get out of here before you decide to take advantage of the fact that you're still physically capable of taking more pictures," I commented, gathering up my evening wrap and bag.

"All right. I'll have Boris drive you to your hotel. We shall dine again tomorrow night? Perhaps here at my home?" His eyes laughed with inner glee. "So that we can share the delights of my albums together?"

"Could be," I nodded.

It might be fun at that, I thought.

Things did not work out that way, however. At eleven the next morning, Serge telephoned me with news that all his plans had to be changed.

"It is that devil Davidoff," he rasped. "He has filed a complaint against me with the Secretariat. He has accused me of taking bribes."

I rubbed my sleep-shuttered eyes with my knuckles trying to focus my thoughts. "And did you? Take bribes?" I asked.

"Certainly! Who doesn't? I must maintain my standard of living. You can understand that, coming from a capitalist country as you do."

"Hmmm! And does he have proof that will stand up at a trial?"

"Who knows? He claims he does. Judging by last night, the way those photographers would have had proof of my moral decadence, as the Party calls it, I'd say he does."

"How much time do you have?"

"What do you mean, how much time?"

"You aren't taking this lying down, are you?"

"I cannot prove my innocence. And in Russia, you are practically presumed guilty unless you can."

I was wide awake by this time. I threw back the bedclothes and slid my shapely gams over the edge of the bed. My brain was working six miles to the nano-second.

"Serge, don't do anything rash. I have an idea."

His chuckle was almost despairing. "You cannot help me, my little blonde one. Nobody can help Serge Akonov at such a time."

"Where are you now?"

"In my office, where I just got the word from a friend. The Secretariat moves fast at such a time. I will probably be notified this afternoon that I am suspended from all duties pending an investigation of the complaint and its proofs."

"Then go home. Now. At once. I'll meet you there."

"It is useless to fight such an accusation, especially when I am positive that Alexei Davidoff can prove everything he says."

I was losing my temper. "Will you do as I say, god-damit? Go home. I'll meet you there in half an hour."

I hung up and then stood up. Ignoring my negligee, I strode naked into the bath. A hot shower, fresh new lingerie and a dress, and I would be ready to hit Serge Akonov with the soft sell he seemed so ready to hear.

A taxi let me off three blocks from his house. I walked the rest of the way, figuring that if nobody saw me entering his place, they would not connect us until it would be too late.

Serge himself was at the door, opening it as I turned in. His face was sallow, lined with worry and fatigue. His playboy years were catching up with him.

"Now, what was it you had to tell me?" he growled.

"Easy, easy," I chided. "Don't panic, man."

"Panic? Why not panic? You don't know our Russian justice. It is a frightening thing. I will not have the defense counsel you Americans are entitled to. Mine will be a lawyer picked by the State. He will not dare to free me if the Presidium doesn't want me freed. You must understand that."

"Sure, sure," I acknowledged, leading the way into his living room. "But suppose you aren't here to be served with a summons to answer Davidoff's charges? Suppose you don't go back to your office?"

He stared at me as if I'd blown my mind. Deep down, despite his playboy ways, Serge Akonov was a stolid Slav with little sense of humor, with an acceptance of the Party and its relentless patterns that had been bred into him since birth. He was no young intellectual who could rebel at the status quo and seek to change it, like the writers who have gone on trial for their non-Marxist ideas and principles. Serge Akonov was a good Party member.

His life was owned and managed by the Party. Oh, he could flout it privately when he went on his trips or when he participated in an orgy, but essentially he was not an individual, he was just a cog in a vast machine.

I had to change his way of thinking.

I sat down and crossed my legs. He glanced at my gams, which I considered a good sign. He might be a Marxist, but he was a man. I let my underthigh show and waggled my leg so that my skirt would slide back a little more.

"Suppose you don't go back to your office," I began. As he started to speak, I lifted my hand. "No, wait. Let me carry the ball for a moment. You stay in my apartment today and tonight. Davidoff won't find you there, we'll make sure of that."

"Tomorrow morning I rent a car and we drive south to the Black Sea. You know those resort towns, don't you? Odessa? Sochi? Tblisi?"

He nodded. His eyes were brightening a little. I had him hooked, for the moment. I crossed my legs, giving him another show.

"Okay, then. Say we go to Sochi. Nobody knows us on the road, right? Even an eager-beaver like Davidoff won't be able to find you right away. Don't tell your chauffeur where you're going."

"So we hide in Sochi for a few days," he grumbled. "A week—even two weeks, with luck. Then the KBG closes in and I'm a prisoner. As for you—they will want to know why you are risking your life for me. And what will you tell them?"

"I won't tell them a damn thing, because they aren't going to catch us. We're going to Sochi for a day or two—long enough for me to make a contact of my own. Then we're off to Turkey."

He sat back, staring at me. At my face this time, not at my thighs. He remained immobile for so long that I began to get impatient. "Well?" I asked. "What about it?"

"You make it sound so easy," he protested. "Not that that is not a good thing, it is. We may even be able to carry it off. What I am asking myself is, why are you willing to go out on a limb for me? What can you get out of it that will make it all worthwhile?"

I nibbled at my lower lip. Ought I spill the baked Bostons now, or wait until later? It was a decision that would affect his life and mine.

"Full steam ahead," I decided, "and damn the torpedoes! Serge, I'm going to level with you. I happen to

know about that five-billion-dollar treasure you jotted the coordinates to, in your little black book."

I honest to God thought he would collapse. His face went white, his hands shook, his eyes bulged and his jaw dropped. His entire body gave one massive shudder. Then his palm went over his yellow crewcut.

"I must believe it," He muttered. "I thought I was the only one who knew about that gold bullion. How did you learn?"

I shook my head. "Can't tell you at the moment. But I can offer you a few million dollars of that bullion—if you'll work with me to get it."

"I'm not dreaming all this?" he asked with a rueful smile.

"It's no dream," I informed him.

Telling him enough about Magda Kallay and how I had watched her slip his notebook from his inner coat pocket, I made him a true believer. He cursed softly as I explained how I had photographed it. I explained I was the lady from L.U.S.T., in his suite to take snaps of the codebook, but that I was not averse to a little extra dividend on a job.

"I never suspected," he muttered. "I thought Magda was after the gold bullion. Oh, I knew a little about her reputation, that she was a girl with both eyes open for any opportunity. I guess I wasn't careful enough."

"Is it a deal?"

His face grew shrewd. "Why should I tell you where the treasure is?"

"Because you know damn well you'll never get out of Russia without my help. Because you don't want to spend the rest of your life as a political prisoner, should they let you live. You'd rather spend it as a multi-millionaire in Rio de Janiero or the Argentine. Because six

or seven million American dollars is better than nothing but the knowledge of where five billion dollars in gold bullion is hidden.

"You can never hope to raise that gold from the sea, not by yourself. You need a big salvage operation—the sort of operation L.U.S.T. can perform."

He grinned, showing perfect white teeth. "Put very well, Eve. And very, very true. How do I know L.U.S.T. will live up to its end of the bargain?"

"Because I tell you it will."

He thought about that, head bent. Finally he sighed and shrugged, spreading his hands wide. "Beggars have never been choosers, even in my country. I agree."

He held out his hand. I clasped it. Then I said, "Hurry it up. Take what you need in the line of clothes. Pack your bags."

"I will have Boris drive my bags to a rendezvous point in Murom, where he has delivered bags before, when I went on—ah—a little vacation, and didn't want anybody to know about it. Nobody will think you're going on an extended trip if you leave without valises, right?"

I had a stop to make the scene at the Tretyakov Gallery before Serge and I took off. There were gadgets inside some of the primary structures at the gallery that I had to have before I dared make a run across the Turko-Russian border.

I bought a ZIL limousine, a second-hand job, that would be large enough to handle all our luggage. I went back to the hotel and packed my Wings bags.

Then I slipped out of my clothes and into the black body stocking I had worn in New York when photographing the Russian codebook. I buckled the black leather belt that held my burglar tools and other as-

sorted gadgets about my middle. I attached a length of long, thin cord to a hook.

I put on a coat and went downstairs. The big floppy collar of my bathrobe coat—a Victor Joris—was up around my neck and face so as to hide the body stocking hood, with only my bare face peeping out. Nobody paid any attention to me as I strolled casually through the lobby. Everybody thought the crazy *Americanski* girl was going out for another walk, I am sure.

I drove to the Tretyakov Gallery, parking the ZIL about two blocks away. I slipped off my coat and headed through the dark night to the deepest shadows below a window in the gallery.

I fastened suction discs on my arms and knees and began my climb. A thin, blued-steel jimmy unlocked a window while I was clinging to the wall. I opened the window and slid into the darkness.

While acting out my role as girl guide to the art exhibit, I had cased this floor where I worked to an absolute exactness. I could walk about in total blackness, yet proceed normally. So many paces to the first primary structure, so many steps further on, so many back to the window—that sort of thing. I had it down pat.

I moved to the first primary structure, the one that held the Aerosystems rocket belts and tanks. I pressed the stud and part of the structure wall opened. I lifted out the belts and tanks and set them on the floor. I made no sound: I would have been a great girl burglar if my conscience hadn't stopped me when I was still in my teens.

From a plywood "presence" I lifted out a small but high-powered radio transmitter and a multi-barreled rocket gun that could fire half a dozen projectiles at once, up to a range of six hundred feet.

Some of this armament I could slip into, or hang from, my belt. The big objects, like the rocket belts and tanks I had to tie to my thin, strong cord and lower out the window after making certain that nobody was passing this side of the gallery. I lowered them into the bushes where they would be hidden from any passersby.

I had to pause once in my labors because the gallery guard was making his rounds, clicking on the lights and giving a cursory glance here and there. I hid behind one of the larger primary structures while he stood by the doorway, staring in. Then the light went out. I heard his footsteps moving off into another part of the building and I was just about home free.

Or so I thought.

Because just as I was reaching for the window sill to hoist myself up and out, the lights went on again, blazing bright. The guard saw my black-stockinged body framed against the wall and gave a choked, disbelieving yell.

"Halt. Halt or I shoot!"

I turned slowly, smiling and raising my hands. He was a guard I had seen about the American art wing from time to time, but he did not recognize my face. Or maybe he had never looked at it. His eyes hit my big breasts where they jellied to my moves, and went down to my mounded belly and *mons veneris*. He gulped and flushed.

The body-stockings was like a transparent black mist on the Drum bod. It showed everything, every little detail, like navel and body hairs and any creases that might be there.

"Who are you?" he challenged. "What are you doing here?"

"I'm a thief, of course. Penelope Courage. I came to

steal the primary structure—that big one there by the window.”

The guard looked stunned. “What? Why would anybody in his right mind want to steal that thing? It’s ridiculous—but then so many Americans are ridiculous.”

“You have a point there,” I admitted.

All this time I was walking toward him, both hands held high. He was still looking at my body, since I had nothing on under the body stocking, and he was getting aroused by the sight of my nakedness beneath the thin material. Maybe that’s why he let me get so close.

Suddenly he growled, “What are all those funny looking things you have hanging from that belt?”

I arched my hips like a bump and grind artist, as if to give him a good look at the belt. I gave him a pretty good view of the Drum privacy at the same time. I could hear him swallow.

Then I moved in two directions at once. My right hand went out to hit the light switch. My left foot lifted and took him just under the ribcage with a savat kick. The breath whooshed out of his lungs and he toppled forward.

As he fell, I aimed the edge of my hand in the general direction of his neck. It thudded home with a dull crunch. He dropped and never moved.

I ran for the window, leaped, caught hold and hoisted.

I slithered through the opening, paused to close the window after securing my grip with my suction discs, then lowered myself to the ground. I drove the ZIL back to the gallery, near the bushes into which I’d dropped the rockets. I slid out, unlocked the trunk and tossed them in.

Momentarily I expected the guard to raise the alarm, but nothing happened. I locked the trunk, got back into

the big limousine, and drove through the Moscow night to the hotel.

I made it back to my hotel room, got dressed in an A-line dress with matching topcoat, and rang for the bell-boy. I let drop the hint that I was on my way to Leningrad, to visit the Hermitage.

"At night?" he wondered.

"It's the best time. No traffic."

He nodded glumly, but he brightened when I gave him a tip of ten rubles. He offered to put my things in the trunk, but since the trunk already contained the rocket belts, I had him slide my Wings luggage into the tonneau.

I wheeled the ZIL into the late-hour traffic, such as it was, eased down an intersecting avenue to Gorki Street, and picked up Serge Akonov. He was carrying a briefcase, no more.

"I will tell you how to go," he said as he settled himself in the seat. "We must go first to Murom to pick up my bags. And Murom lies due east of Moscow."

"Will Boris be able to tell the KGB anything?"

"Only that he delivered my luggage to a house in Murom, as he has done so often before. From Murom we will go south, but only you and I shall know that. We've jumped the gun, as you Americans say. I begin to hope, Eve."

We drove without incident to Murom. Serge told me to pull up before a wooden frame church in the suburbs, and while I sat there admiring this building that looked as though it had been built a thousand years ago, Serge was inside talking to the priest and gathering his bags together.

The ZIL is a fairly large car, but we were pretty crowded when his valises were pushed in with mine. I

told Serge we would be rather conspicuous if we carried this much with us.

"We'll have to risk it. We can't visit one of the Black Sea resort towns without luggage. That would make us really conspicuous. And we'd be in one place there, not moving as we are now. No, I think we'll be all right. Though most people travel to Sukhumi Beach by train, there are others—more affluent, let's say—who drive there. We are of the affluent ones."

"You know Russian ways, so you're the boss."

His hand patted my thigh as he beamed. Now that we were free of Moscow and on our way, on a trip similar to other trips the Party Playboy had made, he was regaining his good spirits. I think he had an idea we were on a kind of honeymoon.

We drove eastward to Kazan, a five-hundred-mile drive that took us all day and most of the night. Russian country roads leave much to be desired to someone used to the magnificent highways of the United States. They are dirt in many places, and the going must of necessity be slow.

It takes nine days by Volga river steamer from Moscow to the Caspian Sea, but we would halve that, by car. Besides, while we were parallelling the Volga on land, we would branch off from it at Volgograd—formerly Stalingrad—bypassing the city to head southwest to Sochi.

This was wide flatland through which we drove. It is the central portion of that gigantic tableland which stretches from eastern Germany through Poland to the Ural Mountains. It is a world of small forests and neat, small villages, with fields laden with vegetables, wheat and corn. The onion-shaped steeple of a church, the sight of a tractor in a field, the houses of a village

grown up about a State farm, barges on the river moving slowly through the dying sunlight, these were the sights of rural Russia. There was the scent of baking black bread, the stronger odor of a cheap tobacco known as *mahorka*, the fragrance of flowers in a tiny garden, the ripeness of growing things spouting from the earth. These were its smells.

We passed the Kuibyshev Reservoir and headed south on the second day. We had spent the night together as man and wife in a small hotel just outside Kazan. We had no sex. I was too tired from driving, and I think Serge Akonov was too worried about his future to feel much like fooling around.

From time to time we caught little glimpses of everyday life as lived by the people in the riverside towns. Washerwomen on rafts just offshore were soaping their clothes and rinsing them, ignoring the huge masses of logs roped together for transportation downstream that were tended by a couple of muscular workmen. There was a neat, clean look to this world. Cleanliness is a part of the Russian makeup, it seems. There is a law in Moscow that if you have a dirty car, you cannot drive it on the Moscow streets. The same law, in varying ways, must apply to the entire country.

Labor gangs made up of women plied picks and shovels as they repaired a dike against the possibility of flooding. We drove past little communities of small houses, each with its garden in the rear. Beaches, where men fished for bream and roach, and where girls and women in bikinis lay sunbathing, tempted us for a swim, but we resisted the urge.

We stopped over the second night in a little community north of Kuibyshev. Our tensions were easing a little, now. Nobody had bothered us, not a question had

been asked. The Russians accepted us for what we claimed to be: a man and wife, well off, on a car trip down the Volga roads. Anyone from the KGB who came asking questions about a fleeing Russian named Serge Akonov would learn very little. Or so we assured each other as we prepared for bed.

"Though I am still afraid of the KBG," Serge muttered, sliding between the bed covers. "They are like bloodhounds. You do not know them as I do. They never leave a trail, once assigned to it."

I was seated on the edge of the bed, sliding off my stockings. When I was tossing one of them onto the nearest chairback, I asked, "Then you think your secret agents will follow us to Sochi?"

"Of course. Somehow, they will learn where we are. But it may take time. I hope and pray it does. Otherwise, we're goners."

He reached out, ran a hand along my bare side and under my armpit to cup a heavy breast. There was a sexual electricity in his touch that made my nipples stand stiffly. He rolled across the bed to kiss my naked hip.

I put a hand on his head, ruffling his yellow head hairs. I asked, "Do you really want to, Serge? We've had a long drive. We'll have an even longer one tomorrow."

A gruff laugh was his answer. "You're an understanding woman, Eve. I do want to—and yet I don't. Sex isn't something to be gone into as one might eat a meal, for the sake of need. It must be sampled slowly and dallied over, as a gourmet enjoys *kotleta po Kizetsky* or perhaps a *vareniky*. It must never be gulped down."

I smiled and tweaked the flesh of his belly. "Then move over and give me some room. I'm beat."

We curled up together like a man and wife after ten

or fifteen years of marriage. I admit his naked body alongside mine gave me ideas, but the thought of all that driving on the morrow was like a pail of cold water in the face. I snuggled up to him and fell asleep almost instantly.

It took us three more days to reach Sochi.

The Black Sea shoreline is the Coney Island, the Brighton, the Riviera, of the Russian people. Here in the dark blue waters of the Black Sea they swim or paddle about, or lie upon its sunlit beaches to sunbathe. The many parks that abound in these resort areas serve as walkways or tiny arenas where the men play chess for interminable hours. There are boats to be rented in which one sails the water, fishing for white fish, or just lazing about, enjoying the salt wind, the balmy *tyeterok* that ripples the waters and brings a lethargic feeling with it.

Fashionable dress in these resort towns consists of a pair of striped pajamas, a prestige item to Russian males, and a corresponding housecoat-like garment which is worn by the women. This is informal wear, of course; the pajamas are not worn to dinner in a hotel; they are for walking about during the daylight hours.

On the beaches themselves, the girls and women wear bikinis made of just enough cloth to cover the essential personal areas. I found it an odd contradiction that the usually prim Russians are quite free about showing off their bodies on the beach. Perhaps it is only the younger people, the "fourth generation" since the Revolution which is so uninhibited, who take a more realistic attitude toward seaside garb. It is only the young, with their more slender bodies, who bare them to the sun. Not for them the staid, decorous trappings of their elders.

We registered at a hotel, a small back-street lodging

place called the Summer Palace, where Serge Akonov was unknown. We used the names Basil and Katerina Plitzkays. We lugged our own bags up to our rooms, and decided to eat in the small dining hall that was part of the hotel.

Tomorrow I would begin my try to contact the L.U.S.T. agents waiting in Turkey for my call. For the present, Serge and I feasted on chicken *tabaka*, cabbage, beets and red peppers, together with lamb *shashlyk* served with a plum sauce. We ate heavily, and were drowsy as we left the table. We slept again, like children curled up with one another.

I left Serge next morning, to hire a speedboat and take it out onto the Black Sea. It was an expensive rental, but we both had plenty of hard cash. His briefcase, as a matter of fact, was filled with Russian rubles.

With me, in a handbag, I carried the high-powered radio transmitter I had slipped from one of the primary structures in the Tretyakov Gallery. It made a pleasant weight in my hand as I slung it into the speedboat. It was my key to open the way from Russia into Turkey.

I raced the powerboat across the blue waters of the Black Sea until I was out of sight of land. Only then did I dare slip the radio sending set from the bag and raise its antenna. I realized I was taking a chance; if the KGB was listening, they would get an earful; but it was a risk I had to take.

"Calling Goldilocks," I said, over and over. "Calling Goldilocks, calling Goldilocks, the baby bear here, the baby bear here."

In half an hour, Goldilocks—our L.U.S.T. code name in Turkey was Operation Goldilocks—finally answered me.

"Goldilocks here. Come in, baby bear."

"Baby bear wants her porridge served, baby bear wants her porridge served," I told my contact man.

"Porridge cannot be served until twelve, two, forty, forty-eight. I repeat, porridge cannot be served until twelve, two, forty, forty-eight. Do you read me?"

Twelve was the date. Tomorrow was the twelfth of the month. The two stood for the time, two o'clock in the afternoon. Forty and forty-eight were the contact coordinates.

"I read you very well. Roger, over."

"You will arrive for porridge, baby bear?"

"I will arrive, with friend bear."

"Until then. Roger and over."

I clicked off my sender and slipped it back inside my handbag. Serge and I had about twenty-odd hours to kill. I decided to kill some of them by bathing in the sun. I figured that if the KBG should be out looking for me, I would be more or less in disguise in just a skimpy bikini among the other women.

So I slipped out of my blouse and slacks as I headed the powerboat toward the beach and, wearing a Russian bikini that showed just as much of the Drum bod as a Rudi Gernreich would, I baked in the Black Sea sunlight until I slid the motorboat in against its quay.

Gathering up my clothes and handbag, I walked down the quay toward the little hut where the motorboat rental agent was seated in the sunlight. I told him I wanted to hire the boat for a whole week. I had enjoyed my swim in the nude, far out and away from prying eyes, I lied, and I wanted to do it every day from now on.

I riffled a handful of rubles under his eyes. I don't know whether it was the money or the sight of my breasts spilling out of their tiny halter that intrigued him,

but he nodded and agreed to make me a price for a weekly rental.

"I suppose I can anchor it where I like?" I asked. "I want to go swimming with my husband, too. It would be easier for me to put a picnic basket in the boat, so we can eat out on the water while we're swimming."

The man grumbled a little, saying this was not the common practice, but like people with a little authority everywhere, he was willing to agree to my arrangement upon the payment of a fee that went into his own pocket and not into the purse of the Soviet State.

I left the quay and walked to the hotel. Serge was not in the room, so I unlocked the valise that held the rocket belts and tanks, the rocket gun and the vial of knock-out gas. I could not take a full armament with me; I had to be selective.

I drew out the rocket belts and slipped them under the bed. I hesitated between the rocket gun and the vial of gas in its tampon-like container. I finally decided that the gun was too obvious. So back into the bag it went.

I fingered the gas vial. It had rubber sides that could be squeezed to liberate the gas. One shot of this would knock out a dozen men. Fortunately, nose filters went with it, or I would kayo myself were I to use it. I slipped the vial and the filters into my handbag.

Then I went shopping for a picnic basket, one large enough to hold the rocket belts. There was no such basket in all of Sochi, I learned, but I figured that I could use two picnic baskets, each one capable of containing a single rocket belt. If anyone saw Serge and me carrying two lunch baskets, they would assume (I hoped) that we ate a lot.

I fitted the Textron belts and tanks into the picnic hampers.

The shadows were lengthening in the hotel room by this time. Where was Serge Akonov? I felt a cold premonitory chill move down my spine. Could the KGB have spotted and arrested him? But if that were the case, why had not those Russian secret agents come for me?

I paced the floor until dusk settled over the room, growing more nervous by the moment. Finally I decided I could wait no longer. I had to find my companion.

I slipped into a loose cotton housecoat, one I'd purchased that afternoon in the same communal store where I'd bought the picnic hampers. Around my inner thigh, strapped above the knee by a garter, I carried a small revolver. I decided to hide the gas vial, so I opened my legs, slipped down my panties, and inserted the vial into my vagina as if it were in truth a tampon. I pulled up my frilly Van Raaltes.

The striped housecoat would hide the gun.

As a matter of strict reporting, the housecoat hid damn near everything, including me. It was loose; it draped around my breasts and hips; it was the next best thing to a tent at hiding all my girl-girl attributes. In this thing, nobody would give me a glance, much less the proverbial second look.

I started strolling casually.

Chapter SIX

I walked around Sochi for more than an hour without any result. If Serge Akonov were here, he was damn well hidden. At a quarter to midnight, I gave up the hunt.

Being a female, I was near to tears as I retraced my steps to the dingy Summer Palace Hotel. To have come this far, to be so near success, and then to have my companion disappear, was a bit too much. I was uptight. I was ready to scream at shadows.

At the hotel, I asked for the room keys.

"Your husband has them," the clerk told me. "He and his friends have already gone up."

The wave of relief that swept over me at the news that Serge was home safe, was dampened by that mention of his friends. I knew who those friends were, all right: the KGB agents who had spotted Serge and arrested him. Now they were upstairs, waiting for me.

I walked up the stairs, thinking hard.

Any normal wife would go the door, knock, and be admitted. Then she would be arrested by the secret police and face a charge along with her husband. I was no wife, so I could not act like one.

In my handbag I still carried the special nail file which I had taken from the baby-faced cameraman, and which was so handy for opening locked doors. I fumbled for it as I stepped onto our floor and moved toward the room where Serge Akonov and the KGB agents awaited my arrival.

One door from my own, I paused to insert the tip of the nail file and wriggle it about. The lock bolt clicked back. Gently I opened the door. The room was dark. I tiptoed across the floor toward the window and lifted it.

There was ten feet of stonework between this window and the window of my room. A narrow ledge, maybe four inches wide, ran around the building just under the window. If I stepped out on that and lost my balance, I would fall onto the sidewalk below.

I have taken greater risks.

I kicked off my shoes, I slipped out the window and got a toehold on the ledge. I tiptoed my way along the ledge until I was at the bedroom window of our small suite. I leaned over and scratched at the glass.

I waited. I heard voices murmuring, so I scratched again.

The window lifted. A head poked out. My left hand was on the cross-bar of the window above that curious head. With all my might, I shoved downward.

The bottom edge of the window was like a guillotine as it slammed into the back of the KGB man's head. It drove his forehead hard against the sill. He went out like a wet candle.

I moved fast, now. I slid back to the other bedroom window, moved inside, and ran like an Olympic sprinter into the hall. I used the nail file to open my own door. I slithered into the darkness and stood like a statue.

"——have happened?"

"Maybe the window fell on him," I heard Serge mutter.

"It must be. There is no one outside."

I moved toward the bedroom doorway, listening to the sounds of one KGB man working to revive the other. I had no weapon, so my opponents had a distinct advantage over helpless little me. I put the Drum head in the doorway.

There were two KGB men in the bedroom. One lay flat on his face, where he had fallen after his fellow had dragged him away from the window. The other secret agent was bent over him, his back to me. Serge was crouched, also staring down, his face turned away.

On my stockinged toes I ran forward. My right hand swung in a short arc, so that the edge of my hand hit the conscious KGB boy smack across his right temple. This is a blow that can kill, if delivered with sufficient strength. I gave it all I had.

The man made a sighing sound as he fell across the body of his companion. Serge whirled, gaping.

My finger was to my lips, so he made only a choking sound. I whispered, "Let's bug out, man."

He looked at the KGB men, at me, his face yellow with strain. His eyes bulged a little; he had resigned himself to doom; this was a reprieve that exploded emotion in him like a psychic grenade. His hand shook as he extended it toward me.

"H-how did you d-do it?" he quavered.

"Never mind that now. Just come on." I moved away from him toward the door, pausing to lift one of the picnic hampers, saying, "Grab the other one, we may need what's in it."

"My things," he protested, gesturing toward his luggage.

"At a time like this?"

He picked up the hamper and followed me.

It was a weird time to go on a picnic—a few minutes past midnight—but if it wasn't now, we'd never go. We went down the back stairs to avoid the eyes of the desk clerk, and came out into the faint moonlight that turned the cobblestone street to silver.

We walked swiftly toward the quay where I'd left the powerboat. Serge was bursting with curiosity, but he controlled himself to pace beside me like a husband of long standing indulging his wife in her little whimsies.

The boat was swinging from the quay by a rope hitched to a ringbolt. It took us a matter of moments to drop in the hampers, step into the motorboat, and cast off. I gathered up the rope and dropped it under a thwart while Serge started the motor.

The noise of the engine sounded like a thunderclap in the otherwise silent night, but it couldn't be helped. With Serge at the wheel, we nosed our way out into the Black Sea.

"We have hours to kill," I told him.

"I'll take her ten miles out and drift," he nodded.

We slid through the water with a gurgling sound, only the crescent moon following our progress. It was quiet, peaceful, with the canopy of stars high overhead. I found myself wondering why there must be such things as secret agents, suspicion between nations, flights in the darkness. Oh, well. If there were none of those things, I'd be out of a job.

When only the Black Sea waters, gently swelling, were about us, Serge shut off the motor. We drifted silently in a noiseless world.

The sun came up hours later, over the Caucasus Mountains. Neither of us had slept for a moment. We

had sat quietly, scarcely speaking, in a kind of mesmeric trance. Rescue was coming across from Turkey. The question was: would it arrive in time?

Or would the KGB men whom I had knocked unconscious recover, and bring a patrol boat searching the area for us? If the patrol boat arrived before the helicopter from Turkey, we were finished.

In the dawn light, we stared around us. The Black Sea was empty. With renewed hope, we studied the cloudless sky. In the distance we sighted a big jet liner travelling toward Istanbul from Samarkand. I eyed it, wishing I were on it.

The sun got hotter and hotter as the morning edged toward noon. We saw a freighter on the horizon, making its run toward Batumi. Half a dozen times, airplanes went overhead; once, there was a wedge of Russian interceptor planes spreading a thunderous wave across the sky. They seemed to take no notice of us.

One o'clock, by my Movado watch. One more hour to wait. If the helicopter were on time, if no patrol boats came looking for us. These last sixty minutes were the worst of all. I utilized some of them to transfer a few necessities from my handbag to the belt around my middle.

Then we saw it, moving low across the water to escape detection. It was a big Turkish whirlybird but it looked like a magic flying carpet to me. I stood up and waved.

"Oh my God," breathed Serge.

I looked where he pointed, toward three patrol boats coming hull by hull across the water toward us. They were still a good distance away, but they were moving fast. Something whumped in the water and I saw smoke appear at the deck cannon of the foremost vessel.

They were shooting at us, determined that we should not be rescued, even if it meant killing us. Their aim was bad, but it would improve.

"Come on, come on," I howled, waving an arm at the chopper craft, trying to give it more speed. The pilot held his course, I give him that much. He faced up to the cannonbursts spattering the water all around us. "Hurry up! Hurry up!"

It was going to be a near thing. As the whirlybird lowered, the patrol boats were arriving with cannons blazing. Not only our powerboat but the chopper craft as well, was going to explode.

I leaped for the picnic hamper. I shoved one of the rocket belts at Serge. "Put it on. I'll teach you how to work it. That whirlybird isn't going to stay here long. We won't be able to grab the rope ladder. We're going to have to go up to meet it."

Serge groaned, but he was sensible enough to realize that it was our only way out. Back in Long Island Sound, Magda Kallay and I had been able to paddle about until that Hughes job hovered over us. We had plenty of time there. There was no such margin of safety here.

It was jump and maybe live, against staying and dying.

I wriggled into the leather harness with Serge helping. Then I got him into his Aerosystems harness. The noise of the helicopter was deafening. So was the sound of the patrol boat engines.

The cannon-fire was pretty accurate, by this time.

Again and again, geysers of foamy Black Sea water rose upward to the slap and splash of shells landing only yards from the motorboat hull.

"Now!" I screamed, showing him what to do.

He hit the starter stud an instant before me. His jet throbbed as he fed it power. Then he was lifting upward, body stiff, at a steep angle of climb. His body against the cloudless sky was a rising weight headed for the rope ladder the helicopter was hurriedly shaking out.

I hit my own throttle seconds afterward.

Behind me a shell rammed into the powerboat. There was an explosion of red flame and a deafening sound which raced upward. The Textron Bell unit strained its rockets to keep me out of harm's way.

Ahead and above me, Serge Akonov slammed into the rope ladder. So fast was he going by this time that he almost ripped the ladder from its fastenings. The chopper craft swayed and started downward before the pilot could compensate for what had happened.

Then hands dug into the cording, and while Serge Akonov's body swayed wildly, he shut off his rocket power. I was coming fast myself by this time. I thought I was going to miss the ladder entirely, the way it swayed back and forth, but when Serge shut off his rocket motor, his body brought it vertical to the water below.

My hand stabbed out, closed on a rope rung.

Beneath me I could see the crew members of the patrol boats aiming their rifles up at us, pressing the triggers. I felt the wind of the bullets as they missed. The chopper was rising swiftly now. Soon we would be out of sight of those boats.

From my belt I yanked the multi-barreled rocket pistol and aimed it. I squeezed the trigger. Two hundred yards away, projectiles ripped into two of the patrol boats.

The world blew up below me.

Those boats split apart in a red hell of flame and noise. The third boat damn near capsized with the fury of the detonations. I had no time to do more than feel a momentary pang of regret for the men who were dying in those holocausts. The upward flight of the helicopter was fast now; the pilot was swinging it about even as he rose skyward to begin his run for Turkey.

I dangled like a spider at the end of its web as the sea rolled away below. Overhead, Serge was climbing into the chopper. I could see his leg lift as he stepped inward, then he was out of sight.

I crawled up the ladder, slipping out of the rocket belt harness, letting the whole thing drop and sink into the water. It was a lot easier going up the rope without that Textron Bell gadget.

Hand over hand I went upward.

The door was open, beckoning me invitingly.

I put a hand on the edge, lifting upward. I caught hold of an extended hand and was raised inside. Too late, I saw the stricken look on Serge Akonov's face. He looked like a man about to walk to the gallows.

Then I noticed the man beside him. He had a gun and was pointing it at the middle of my forehead.

"Come inside, Miss Drum," the man said. "You are our prisoner, along with your lover, here." His smile grew broader. "What a holiday Pravda will have with this story. 'Beautiful American Girl Spy Helps Russian Official To Defect!' Oh, I can see the headlines now."

I could see nothing but the gun in my face.

The whirlybird was making a wide circle, swinging back toward the Russian mainland. Serge was slumped in his seat, his face a mirror of catastrophe. I could expect no help from him.

I climbed into the seat assigned me, and sat there with

my thighs pressed together. My captor was beaming with self-delight. He had captured a defector and the temptress who had used her wiles, like Delilah, to shear a fellow Russian of the hair of his loyalty. He would get a promotion; he might even be taken into the Secretariat. He was a very happy man. He was so happy that he did not see me remove the filters from my belt and push them into my nostrils.

Me, I was thinking about the vial of gas located in my most private part. I had no way of taking that out without tipping my hand. What I had to do must be done where it was, and by the unaided power of the *constrictor vaginae* muscles of my privacy.

Every woman possesses muscles in her vaginal tunnel. Few in our Western World ever use them, but in the East, where women are really women, a female who possesses the ability to tighten or loosen those vaginal muscles is highly regarded. An Arab calls her a *qebbadzeh* and her price, if she works in a brothel, is many times that of an ordinary harlot. The Indian names her *saraotastriyan*, a nutcracker woman, and the muscles with which she performs this milking act, the *chimti*, the pair of tongs.

Your Frenchman knows this female ability, and names it *casse-noisette*. Me, I didn't have any special name for it, I just had the power. And man, I used it. I pumped and pumped for dear life, squeezing away as if I were an Egyptian *kabbazh*.

I could hear the little *squiff, squiff* sounds as the squeezed rubber walls of the vial spurted out that gas, possibly because I was expecting to hear it. The men could not; their ears were not attuned. My thighs were spread apart by this time, to give the gas greater room

to emerge. I just sat there squeezing, squeezing, and kept my fingers crossed for good luck.

The interior of the helicopter made a perfect spot for the gas that was being spurted out of its nesting place. Only I had filters in my nostrils; the others were completely unprotected.

Serge seemed to sag, suddenly. The man with the pistol turned toward him inquiringly.

To distract him, I said, in a voice that must have sounded like a Dristan commercial—those nasty filters! —“He’s been through an emotional strain. I think he’s collapsed from the reaction.”

The man looked at me, suspicion in his eyes.

Then the pilot made a choking sound and pitched forward over the wheel. The man with the gun turned a startled face in his direction just as the chopper swerved and started seaward.

The sudden change of direction overbalanced the man with the gun. He slid out of his seat, landing right at my feet. I spread my legs wide as he turned his head to stare between my thighs.

He was seeing a faint smoke coming out of me in little spurts. His eyes bulged; he lifted them to stare up at my smiling face.

“Take a faceful of it, mac,” I muttered.

I squeezed and squeezed, as if I held a lover inside me. The understanding eyes rolled a little in the man’s head as his neck went limp and his head fell back to bang against the forward seat where the pilot lay comatose.

The chopper craft was careening crazily through the sky. I had to reach out to grip at seatbacks to steady myself as I rose and climbed forward. Underfoot, the cabin

floor was rocking back and forth. It was all I could do to hang on.

But then I got a hand twisted in the hair of the pilot, yanking him sideways and out of the seat so that he fell across Serge Akonov's thighs. I stepped over the chair-back and slid my behind into the seat he had just vacated.

In my training as a L.U.S.T. lady, I am taught things like flying helicopters against emergencies such as this. I put my hands on the wheel, tried to remember everything I had been taught, and said a prayer to Icarus, that first airman. He crashed, by the way—but that's another story.

I brought the 'copter out of its spin, righting it a scant hundred feet above the Black Sea. At the same time, I turned it around and headed it toward Turkey. I did not trust the Russians. They might send out interceptor planes to learn the whereabouts of their patrol boats, and a chopper craft is a sitting duck for fighter planes.

I skimmed the waves, learning the controls.

The Black Sea is an arm of the Mediterranean, connected to it by the Sea of Marmora and the Dardenelles. In area it is one of the larger seas in the world, but to me, it seemed to be almost limitless as I took the 'copter over the waves and toward the Turkish coastline. Three men lay unconscious beside me. Since I didn't know how long the gas would remain effective, I took charge of all the weapons I could find, and kept them in my lap as I steered the helicopter toward land.

My let-down point was a field behind the coastal village of Analtya. L.U.S.T. would have its men to meet me and drive me to the city of Trebzon. In Trebzon, Serge and I would be lodged in a small hotel until L.U.S.T.

was ready to make its try for the Nazi treasure hoard.

This was the plan. Obviously, since the helicopter contained KGB secret agents instead of L.U.S.T. operatives, something had gone wrong. As the blue waters of the Black Sea swept past beneath my landing gear, I wondered if I would run into a couple of SAM missiles. I could not turn back. I had to go on. And I didn't even have anybody to talk to.

I swept over a stretch of sandy shore, over a grassy meadow. To my left, I could make out the rooftops of small houses in Analtya. To my right, I saw a flat dirt field that would be ideal for a whirlybird landing. I landed, reaching for one of the Russian Nagant pistols that the KGB boys had been carrying.

The chopper bumped harshly, then settled. I shut off the motor. Gun in hand, I waited. I saw the cloud of dust first, far off to the right, and then the car nosing through those dun clouds. It was a low-slung Maserati, with two men in the seats. It roared across the dirt field and stopped inches from the helicopter.

I opened the door and poked my gun out.

"Easy there, Oh Oh Sex," an American voice said.

"Sure, easy," I snapped. "Do you know the troubles I've had? Why the hell weren't you here to meet me on time?"

"Because of those troubles," the other man grinned. "We got raided by the KGB. The 'copter pilot's in a hospital with a wound in his shoulder. They stole the whirlybird and went to meet you. We had no way to warn you."

I jerked a thumb back over my shoulder at the three men in the helicopter. "The blond one's Serge Akonov. The other two I leave to your tender mercies."

"I don't suppose they'll talk," muttered the taller of

the agents, lifting a hand to help me down. He was lean and hard like whipcord, with a thatch of brown hair cut in such a way that he looked like a movie star.

The other man was stockier, fleshier, and was probably a lot stronger. He eyed my legs as my Russian housecoat flapped when I jumped. I bounced a little when my feet hit, and my breasts went up and down a couple of times. Both boys eyed them hungrily.

I was more than a little hungry myself. For the past few days, Serge Akonov and I had been touring Russia, sleeping together at night—sleeping, not sexing—and I was just about ready for some refined rape.

I gave them both a great big smile.

Tall Man said, "I'm Jim Wilson. This is Fred Coleman."

Serge Akonov groaned, stirring in the 'copter cabin. I held out my hand to my L.U.S.T. compatriots, saying, "Pleased to meet you both. Now if you'll just direct me to the nearest shower, where I can wash the grime off, I'll be more human."

Fred murmured, "Why don't you take the Maserati into town? You'll find a character there with blonde hair about six-foot-three. His name is Charley Duncan. Tell him to bring the station wagon out here. Then you can go take your shower, in room 25."

I slipped into the Maserati and did what the man said.

An hour later I was luxuriating in the tiled shower which was attached to Room 25 of the Analtia Hotel. I had soaped up a washcloth and was busily laving myself. My job was done. All that remained was to find the gold bullion and drag it up from its watery grave. Or so I thought. Silly little me. I should have known better.

There was a knock on the door. Then a voice yelled

something I could not make out with the shower water drumming down on me. So I shut off the water.

"What's with it?" I carolled.

"Jim Wilson here, Miss Drum. We have problems. From papers in the pockets of those men you gassed, we've learned that there are two more KGB men in town. We won't be safe until we get our hands on them."

I wrapped a towel around my nudity and stepped out into the bedroom. Jim let his eyes go big and round as he studied my tanned legs and plump upper thighs, which the towel did nothing to hide. Up above, my breasts were bulging out above the hastily tied knot.

"It sounds as if I have something to do with making us all safe," I smiled, sitting on the couch and crossing my bare legs. I was remembering the way Magda Kallay had sat like this, before David Anderjanian. Somehow, the memory added to the sweetness of the admiration in the male eyes sliding under the towel.

"You do. The other side knows Akonov. They know he's teamed up with you. They don't know why. They won't be able to snatch you, here in Turkey—so they'll try to kill you both."

"How utterly jolly."

His smile was tense. I nodded. "All right, I get the picture. I'm to be a bull's-eye for a bullet. When? How? Where?"

"All they have to go on is the fact that you two are together. They'll keep an eye on you, they'll try to kill you. Charley, Fred and I—we'll be on hand when they do."

My eyebrows arched. "Even in the bedroom?"

"Especially in the bedroom. Then it will be nighttime, quiet, just the right moment for murder."

I recrossed my thighs, knowing that Jim Wilson was getting an eyefull of my blonde femininity. "I think I ought to warn you. Sergey-Boy is a regular rabbit in a bed. He likes his loving long and often. You'll get embarrassed."

Jim chuckled, "We all have to make sacrifices for our country."

So it was arranged. Jim, Charley and Fred never came near us as Serge and I took up where we left off, playing man and wife. Serge had walked the gas out of his system by this time, and was eager to celebrate his defection with a bang.

Did I say bang?

No bang.

He wanted to bang me, that's true.

And I kind of wanted to be his firecracker, I must admit.

But we had to show ourselves around town, let the opposition see us, learn where we were holed up. Serge, of course, was all for starting his erotic explosions right away, like ten minutes after Jim Wilson had bowed himself out, with me still in the towel.

When Serge came in, I was stark naked on the edge of the bed, pulling on a pair of gossamer stockings. The L.U.S.T. boys had done good work in collecting a wardrobe for me. I had five dresses, two garterbelts, half a dozen pairs of shoes, stockings of varying colors. The hose I was slipping up my leg at the moment were black nylons.

"Honey," my Russian roué gurgled, "You look great."

"Down, boy! We have work to do."

"Later, *devushka*."

He started to undress. I kept on dressing.

He yanked off his shorts just as my dress was going

down over my head. He yelled disappointedly as I covered up the Drum chassis. Staring at his eagerness, I could understand the nature of his disappointment, but I had to be just as hard as he was about this.

"First, we walk," I dimpled. "Then we act. After that—well, we are registered as man and wife."

He howled his frustration, but I slipped past his reaching arms and made it out the door. "See you in the lobby," I promised.

We strolled down the Analtya main street, peering into the few shop windows at various dusty articles. A little depressed—mentally, I compared these mean shops to those great ones along New York's Fifth Avenue—we wandered to the waterfront where the clean sea wind made us feel better. It also made us hungry, so we went back to the hotel.

We dined on *Imam bayaldi*, an eggplant appetizer, and *cous-cous*, which is a tasty mixture of lamb, vegetables and zucchini, with tomatoes. We gobbled our way through that, then topped it off with apricot *tortes* and cups of black Turkish coffee.

I used my eyes while dining, as I do my legs while walking. There were two men, burly characters in the shapeless pants and coats of Eastern Europe, with big workingman shoes on their feet, who seemed particularly interested in Sergey-boy and me.

They had been sitting in the lobby as I had come downstairs. They had pointed like hunting hounds at sight of me, and when Serge joined me, they glanced at each other and nodded. I am sure they figured we believed ourselves to be safe and sound in Analtya.

They had trotted along behind us on our walk. My spine had prickled a little for fear a bullet would come darting between my vertebrae, but we had arrived back

at the hotel all in one piece. Now, at the dining table, Serge and I were never more than an eye-flicker away from the sight of our two shadows.

It was a little unnerving, but you get used to such things as a secret agent. My Party playboy never noticed a thing.

He was getting *amour* anxious, however. He kept looking at his wristwatch, then at the swells of my breasts under my tight frock. After coffee, he suggested we go upstairs to bed.

"It's been a long day, Eve," he yawned, behind a hand.

"Liar," I giggled. "You aren't a bit sleepy."

I let him lead me by a dimpled elbow up the lobby stairs and to our bedroom, the largest in the hotel. His hand patting my buttocks urged me into the living room part of the suite. He shut and locked the door behind him.

I was halfway across the room, heading for the bedroom door, when he caught up with me. His hands went to the zipper of my dress and dragged it down.

"At last," he murmured, planting a kiss between my shoulder blades.

His lips went down with the zipper, right to my panties, all along my bare spine. The boy had educated lips; they raised quivering love lumps all the way to my buttocks. He was kneeling at this point, and his hands went under my dress in front, and up my stockinged legs to the bare thigh-flesh.

Slowly stroking across my quivering thighs, his palms slid to where my panties hugged my privacy. His fingertips played around there until my hips jerked in a rut-tish reflex. My mouth was open, and I was making gasping sounds.

I had turned my head to look down at him. Out of the corners of my eyes, I saw movement through the suite windows. Jim Wilson and Fred Coleman were peering in, eyes wide. I stuck out my tongue at them. They grinned.

Serge was rising to his feet, his hands easing my dress off my shoulders, drawing it down to my middle. My breasts came spilling out over my blue brassiere cups, swelling and growing hard to my erotic arousal. My nipples were dark brown flints jutting upward. Jim and Fred were taking it all in, eyes moving up and down the exposed Drum torso. It added a fillip to the proceedings, I will admit.

Then my dress was going down, showing the rest of me in blue panties, a black garterbelt, and nylons. I made a picture like something on an old-fashioned French postcard. I wriggled my hips in mock protest when my Russian roué began sliding down my panties, because he was crouched behind me, kissing my buttocks as they came into view.

Down went the sheer nylon panties. Around and around each pale white cheek went his lips and tongue. His hands were in front of me, low down where they could do the most damage to my girlish inhibitions. Each fingertip was a fireball toying with my blonde thatch and what it hid.

I moaned. I am a flesh-and-blood girl with a low boiling point to a knowing operator like Serge Akonov. He had my libido clawing at the walls by the time he swung me around so that he faced my *mons veneris*.

Then he started in on what the French call *fait une langue prolongee*. His slithery tongue was a whip to goad my genitals, a lash to let me know that I was a wanting woman with a ready man willing and able to at-

tend to those wants. My hips in the black garterbelt went back and forth slowly, then circled around lazily. I was sobbing by this time, cursing him softly under my breath while both my hands held his head tightly.

I heard movement on the ledge outside the window. I know Serge did not, because my inner thighs were clamped tightly over his ears. I risked a glance behind me. Jim Wilson was framed in the window which he was opening. His eyes were staring at my bare buttocks as they were shaking so gelatinously, but his hand was waving me toward the bedroom door.

Even an excited broad like me could get the message. The KGB men were coming upstairs to kill us. Jim Wilson and Fred Coleman wanted in so they could save our lives.

I caught Serge, drew him away from his pussycat paté.

"Darling, come on! I can't wait any more!" I panted.

"My little *devrushka!* All right, all right."

His head went back between my shimmying thighs, but now his hands slid up my sides, lifting me ceilingward. Then he began to walk toward the bedroom door, his lips talking silently as they expressed his love and devotion to my girl-girl attributes. We bumped into the wall twice—those jars really added a nip to the proceedings when his teeth clicked together—before he found the door.

He marched me to the bed and fell on it with me still locked in position. I was just about out of my skull by this time. I was moaning and babbling, sobbing and gasping. I doubled up as best I could and tried to strip him down.

I had him half naked when he used his hands to yank away the rest of his clothes. I goggled at his readiness

as he swung toward the foot of the bed to grip my thighs and lift them high in the accepted *samapada-uttana-bandha* of the Hindus. He took me with a single, savage jab.

One thing about my Russian roué. He was no Minute Man. He could prolong his own orgasm almost indefinitely. He beat about my bush for more than ten minutes, during which time I like to have died of delight. My behind bounced and jounced all over that damn bed, and my arms were fiery tentacles straining his hairy chest to my swollen breasts.

I forgot all about the killers who were on their way to do us in. As our love-in got hung up on ways and means, I added my own not inconsiderable knowledge of the amorous arts to the proceedings. I writhed about until I was lying sideways—in that posture recommended by that ruttish Roman, Ovid, for the woman with rounded thighs and a perfect figure. This *in obliquo* position is very restful; it can be continued, with a lover-boy like Serge Akonov, almost indefinitely.

But even during a love-in, there can be too much sameness. So I rolled over, pushed Serge down, and mounted him as Sempronia was wont to mount her lovers in the *Dialogues*. I rode him in this horseback attitude with his hands holding my flopping breasts, and he arching his body beneath me like a rodeo bronc, until a noise behind me made me turn my head.

The two KGB men were standing in the doorway.

Each agent held a Russian Nagant pistol aimed at my bare back. They did not notice Serge, I guess. Besides, from the angle which they stood, they could never have hit a vital part of him. The headboard was in the way. But me, I was right there, like a target dummy waiting to take lead.

My mouth got dry. I opened my lips to scream.

Where the hell were Jim and Fred and Charley?

For a moment, the gunmen stared at my nudity. Then their fingers tightened. And as they did, two shots rang out. The men sagged, dead on their feet. Under me, Serge Akonov was bellowing his pleasure as he convulsed between my thighs.

I don't think he heard the gunshots. He believed that the noise was an erotic eruption. And with the sight of the men dying behind me, and Serge going all out below me, I went into my own act.

Everything got hazy for a few moments while I bounced and bleated, unable to control my muscular spasms. Then I sagged down and lay like a dead woman on top of my Russian roué.

I heard dead bodies being dragged across the carpet in the other room before I fell asleep. I thought, now the road is clear to the five billion dollars in gold bullion.

Ha! Little did I know.

Chapter SEVEN

Next day we flew by Arabian airlines to Tunis.

There was no more need to pose as husband and wife with Serge Akonov. We had thrown off the KGB bloodhounds, and we were shortly to rendezvous in Tunisia with David Anderjanian and the L.U.S.T. team which would assist in the underwater search for the Nazi treasure. So while he sat in a seat beside Fred Coleman, I lounged by myself ahead of Jim Wilson and Charley Duncan.

My job was about done. I had spirited our man out of Russia; now it was up to Wilson, Duncan and Coleman to learn where the gold was located. It was David Anderjanian's job to supervise the raising of the treasure to the surface and its storage in a United States ship.

In ancient times, the city of Carthage rules what is now Tunisia. Today, a few miles from the modern city of Tunis, you can still see some of the ruins of that world which warred with Rome and fathered the great Hannibal. I was making mental plans to explore those ruins while vaguely listening to Serge explaining to Fred Cole-

man how the L.U.S.T. underwater team could locate the bullion.

The Saudi Arabian Airlines plane was humming along four miles above the Mediterranean. I was a little drowsy and only vaguely aware of the story my Russian roué was telling the boys. Actually, I was thinking about doing some shopping in the stores near the Hotel Dar Zarrouk. I guess every girl would like to have a kind of *carte blanche* shopping route, anywhere in the world. Of course, I have to go through a lot before I can indulge myself in this way, but once the job is done, I get to gad about for little items like Balmain and Dior dresses, Cartier jewelry, and Chanel perfumes.

"——husband a Nazi officer in the Afrika Korps," Serge was saying. "I met her in a ski resort, at Zinal in the Swiss Alps. We took to one another, we went side slipping and stem-turning down the slopes and later we swung and swayed in bed. You know? She was a very attractive woman, somewhat older than I, but the rarest wine comes in the oldest kegs, eh?"

"One night she got tipsy on Grand Marnier, and told me that in his last letter, her husband wrote her about a treasure that General Rommel had collected and hidden away in the offshore waters of the Mediterranean, just outside Tunis. Naturally, my curiosity was aroused. When she was asleep, I stole the letter from her jewel box."

His chuckle was thick with remembered guile. I could visualize this Party playboy exhausting the blonde German Frau with sexual exercises, then right afterward, swiping the last letter she had ever received from her husband. I gathered from his voice that he considered it quite a feat.

"I did not stay at Zinal, after that. I left before dawn,

with the letter tucked inside my wallet. Later, I copied the coordinates in my little black notebook. I would never have agreed to turn over those coordinates if your Miss Drum hadn't agreed to get me safely out of Russia. Even so, I am endangering my life by revealing them to you."

"You mean, if the Presidium learns about it?"

"Exactly, yes. But with four or five million dollars in American currency to be placed to my account in a Geneva bank, I feel reasonably safe. I shall go to South America—to Buenos Aires, perhaps—where I can live like a king on such a sum."

The plane was circling, now. Glancing out the window I could see the dark blue waters of the Gulf of Tunis, the houses in white stucco and blue trim. Tunis is a blue world, with the sky an almost brilliant azure high above it. It enjoys mild winters and warm summers, so that there is swimming in its gulf waters from April into November.

There are deserts beyond the city limits out of which pour Arab tribesmen to stride the streets and enjoy the open-air markets. Once a French colony, Tunisia is now an independent republic, while still retaining its former French flavor.

A voice told us to fasten our seat belts and extinguish any cigarettes we might be smoking. An Arab girl in the stewardess costume of the Saudi Arabian Airlines pattered down the aisle, shrilling out orders in a sing-song voice. I settled back and waited for the land to come up and catch me.

After the wheels touched down, the rest was all routine.

The first thing I saw as I ducked out of the hatch and set foot on the landing ladder was David Anderjanian.

My case officer was grinning like a clown. He held out his arms to help me down, but I avoided his touch.

"How's Magda?" I asked coldly, showing my feminine mystique.

"Honey, she's in jail," he beamed.

"What's the matter? Wouldn't she come across?"

He stared at me as if I'd grown another eye. "Eve darling, you don't think I made love to her because I *wanted* to? Or because I was *attracted* to her?"

"Oh, come on now, David! This is Oh Oh Sex you're talking to, not some poor *hausfrau* who doesn't know peas from beans."

"I'll prove it to you—when we're alone," he muttered, and there was something in his voice that made me believe him.

At the moment, he was shaking hands with Serge Akonov, welcoming him to Tunis on behalf of L.U.S.T. Then he turned to Jim, Fred and Charley and they made man-talk while I tapped a toe and waited. I wanted to hear his explanation of his conduct with his Hungarian adventuress. It would make great listening—like maybe Charles Laughton on a 78 LP, reading *Alice in Wonderland*.

When I hinted as much in the taxi that took us from the airport to the Belvedere hotel, he seemed oddly reticent, shushing me with a few hand-waves. I gathered he did not want to clue in Jim, Fred and Charley about what he had in mind.

Just before I went up to my room, he said, "Your job isn't quite over yet, Eve. The brass wants you to keep your eyes on Serge Akonov for a while."

I nodded pertly, getting the message. The KGB would not give up its attempt to silence the defector. They

would make an all-out effort to shoot him down. I was going to be his girl guard for a while.

We gathered that night at dinner in the posh restaurant of the Belvedere to dine on chartreuse of partridge, with *fraises au marasquin* for dessert, and make plans for the next day. David had chartered a converted ketch named the *Hamilcar Barca* for the job. Its hull contained two big Diesel engines, and all the gear we would need for the salvage project.

All it lacked was a bikini for me. I remedied that omission bright and early next morning with a little shopping trip along the main avenues of Tunis. When David came knocking on my hotel door, my female loins were barely wedged into a polka-dot bikini while the matching halter was stretched to the fatigue point trying to hold in my girlish 38s.

"Wow," he muttered after one quick loo.

"I'll suntan while I salvage," I grinned, twisting into a matching beach coat.

"You'll drive the ship's crew freaky," he growled darkly.

I noticed he did not forbid me to wear the get-up. David likes to get his eye exercise by running his eyeballs along the curves of a female body, like every other healthy American male. I wagged my rump at him as I preceeded him into the hotel hallway.

The *Hamilcar Barca* was anchored in the bay. It was a diving ship, outfitted for service in deep water. It contained a decompression chamber, air pressure pumps, and a small crane bolted to the foredeck.

The rattle of a chain told us the anchor was coming up, and the throb of the twin Diesels was a signal that we would be under way in a few minutes. I went for-

ward to the prow with a beach blanket and settled down for some suntanning.

I noticed that I drew stares from every man I passed. It is a comforting thing to a female ego to be the only woman on board ship with a lot of husky he-men. I showed the boys I appreciated their interest by letting my hips joggle and my breasts bounce at every stride.

The sun was hot, the sea air was cool. It was very pleasant to relax on the foredeck and enjoy the salt smell, the vague murmur of male voices, to feel the sixth sense that tells a girl she is the cynosure of a pair of admiring man-eyes. I wriggled about to get comfortable; I sat up to douse myself with Copper-tan; I lay and baked.

The ship ploughed steadily through the harbor waters out to the three-mile limit and beyond. Trust the Desert Fox to think of that fact: we were now in international waters, so Tunisia could not claim the treasure as being within its jurisdiction.

I heard the rattle of the anchor chain and sat up, turning to stare back the length of the deck. David Anderjanian was bent over the chart table with Jim Wilson and Serge Akonov, making pencil notations on a marine chart. Charley Duncan was sliding into an Aqua-lung twin-tank assembly, just beyond them.

I wanted in on the diving, so I trotted my chassis down the deck until I was beaming up at Charley Duncan. "Me, too," I told him, pointing at the oxygen tanks that weighed down the big blonde man.

He looked concerned, glancing at David. "I'm not so sure you'd better go down, Eve. It's a man's job and—"

"Are you kidding?" I asked. He had the grace to laugh. After what I go through on my L.U.S.T. assignments, I felt I could go anywhere in the world a man went.

I held out my arms, making my breasts wobble in their halter covering. "Sock it to me, honey," I told him. He bent and lifted a De Luxe twin pac, complete with harness and reserve valve mechanism, fitting it to my back.

I put on the Aqua-naut face mask and fitted my lips over the seal. It was very comfortable. Charley knelt, I lifted each leg as he tugged on the full-foot fins. I took a few steps around the deck, and nodded.

David came over, chart in his hand.

"I oughtn't let you go down, Eve," he began, "but I know better than to try and stop you from something like this. So okay. You go. But you take orders from Charley, understand? He's our expert."

I mock-saluted a grinning Charley, who said, "You heard the man. You take orders, honey."

A Caravelle jet liner droned high overhead, our only connection with the rest of the world. We were alone here on the Mediterranean like the proverbial painted ship upon the painted ocean. My heart was beating faster in excitement as David handed me a Rolleiflex camera encased in a Rolleimarin metal shell to protect it from the water. These marvels of marine photography operate very efficiently at depths of more than three hundred feet. Charley Duncan and I would not be diving that deep, however.

Charley stepped to the moldboard, mounted it and leaped for the water. I was three steps behind him. The water rushed up at me and I sank down into it, enjoying the cool blueness of the sea as it closed around me.

I flipped over and swam downward, Rolleimarin in my hand, with Charley some five feet ahead of me. His kicking legs were white pillars pumping a path toward the bottom, so I used them as a guide line until I could make

out the sea floor itself. Charley was moving his arm out in a curving motion, signaling me that I was to go off and start the exploration in one direction while he went another.

The underwater world is a beautiful one. There are coral reefs and sea anemones, sponges in strange shapes and odd colors, sometimes moving in an eerie manner when a current sweeps across them. Rockweed fluttered its tendrils at me, and fish of varying colors moved at every level around me.

The Mediterranean is far more salty than the Atlantic, and gives the human body a remarkable buoyancy. The weight of the oxygen tanks helped keep me down, so I swam with little effort between rock formations and down into little sand valleys like a disembodied spirit.

I sighted an amphora, one of those ancient vases in which the Carthaginians, Phoenicians, Greeks and Romans used to ship their oil. It stood by itself, half buried in the bottom silt. I swam down to it, reached out to touch it. It was very smooth, there were no barnacles encrusted on its surface, and no coral. It was like putting my hand on history, so I took a snapshot of it.

In this romantic mood, I swam past a small forest of sea plumes, wondering what hidden life they might harbor, and over a bed of coral. Movement to my left caused me to glance in that direction. I saw Charley Duncan swimming toward me, pressing his fists together at the knuckles. This is undersea talk meaning, *stay together*.

I nodded and swam toward him. Side by side, we moved on across the sandy bottom, over ridges and down into valleys, taking pictures of possible treasure sites from time to time. It was the quiet world of Jacques-Yves Cousteau, where you are alone with beauty you

have never known before, where each distant sand ridge may shelter an unknown wreck from your eyes.

When our reserve valve mechanisms told us our air tanks were half empty, Charley lifted a hand and pointed toward the surface. We moved up through blue water and schools of fish to pop up about a hundred yards from the ship.

We told David about our swim while he and Serge checked the underwater charts. By their calculations, the gold bullion should have been just under our keel. David decided we would eat lunch, then make another dive.

"We'll raise anchor and move on five hundred yards. Jim and I will join you and Eve, Charley. We'll swim toward the four cardinal compass points. That way we ought to establish a definite pattern."

"Maybe the gold has sunk under the bottom sands," I suggested. "I mean, after all, gold is pretty heavy, isn't it?"

Charley Duncan said, "Eve may have a point there. I know it's only been a few years—archeologically speaking—since the treasure was dropped here, but gold is heavy, and a few storms and underwater currents might have stirred up the sand, burying it."

David glanced at Serge. "Did that *hausfrau* give you any hints as to any markers Rommel might have put out to indicate the cache?"

Serge shook his head. "None that I can recall."

Jim Wilson shrugged. "Then all we can do is look."

We looked all that day, and all the next. I was getting my suntan and plenty of exercise but we were getting no nearer the gold bullion. And to make matters worse, David was getting suspicious of the Russian.

"He's conning me," David said to me on the fourth evening of our stay in Tunis. "Either he's lying about

the coordinates, or the husband of his German *hausfrau* made a mistake about them."

We were in my room, sipping chilled Koudiat wine, a drink much relished by the Tunisians, being of excellent bouquet, and of a taste to match the finest French wines. We had just come back from the *Hamilcar Barca*, and I was still in my bikini.

All that sun and swimming had given me a great appetite. I knew the dining room opened at six, and it was five minutes to, by my Movado wristwatch. I yawned and stretched.

"I've got to put on my face, David. I'm hot to trot for some of that lamb *ballotine* this place specializes in. So if you'll forgive me?"

I stood up and started to undo the fastener that held my bikini halter together. David had sat up straighter at my words, an odd expression on his face. I wondered what I'd said to jar him so, or maybe he figured it was time I let him see my mammary glands. He was on a strict no-sex diet, here in Tunis.

"What'd you say?" he asked harshly.

I paused with the loose halter tiebacks in my hands. The front cups were starting to slip down, showing more and more of my untanned globes.

David was looking into my eyes, however. I was a little miffed. He could have shown some interest, even if I hadn't quite forgiven him for the Magda Kallay episode. So I snapped, "I'm going to put on a new face. You know, disguise myself behind some Estee Lauder face powder and lipstick."

"Disguise," he breathed. "Yeah. Of course."

"What's the matter? Don't you like the Drum features as-is?"

David got up and put his big arms around me, hugging

me. He kissed me on the forehead, as if I were a good little girl being rewarded. I nestled closer to his six-foot, four-inch frame, letting my breasts grow hard against him.

"Sure I do, honey—but I'm talking about other treasures. Like the gold bullion. Suppose Rommel put a disguise on top of his treasure? Hey? Like fake coral, or something similar?"

"So an ordinary searcher would be fooled."

"Right. Then, even the coordinates got into the wrong hands—like ours—the gold itself would be safe."

I rubbed my breasts against his chest. He returned the compliment by moving his manhood against my thighs.

I murmured, "So we begin all over again."

"Did you notice anything on the sea bottom that might have been a kind of disguise, Eve?"

"Not that I can remember, David? Do you want to go on talking about gold right now? At a time like this?"

He grinned down at me. David Anderjanian is a great duty officer. He can keep his mind on important subjects while he's damn near exploding with desire. It often annoys the hell out of me.

"I do. And so do you, Oh Oh Sex."

"I do like hell," I announced honestly.

"Later, baby." He kissed the tip of my nose. "Let's go eat, first. Then we'll come back here and talk about disguises and sunken treasure for the rest of the night."

I bumped my loins into him, as a reminder.

"And other things," he nodded happily.

We kind of hurried through dinner, that night. The lamb *ballotine* was everything it was cracked up to be, the *potage* Parmentier was out of this world, and the *tarte aux fraises* just melted in your mouth. The wines

were perfect, the coffee superb. But my mind was on other things.

Serge Akonov was all for doing a little slumming, like in the *medina*—the native quarter—of Tunis. Seems he had heard of a place where a number of belly-dancers—the real thing—put on a show guaranteed to make your blood boil. By the real thing, I do not mean the belly-dancers who perform on the American stage. These belly-dancers perform the *res es-surreh* of the North African world which, when done naked, as it is, is really something else again.

We talked Serge out of his idea, but we had to promise him that tomorrow night we would do the belly-dancer bit. I was anxious to get up in my room with David, while David was equally anxious to talk about the gold bullion and where it might be hidden.

He started his pitch at the dinner table over the soup, and he was still yakking away when I unlocked my bedroom door to let us in. I knew a good way to quiet his talking jag. I simply lifted the skirt of my red satin sheath up above my garterbelt, after turning on the lights, and walked ahead of him into the bedroom.

David Anderjanian is an everything man. He likes female legs, womanly hips, mature bosoms, backs and behinds. Beneath the skirt hem he got a real good look at my jiggling buttocks, at my nude thighs above stockinged legs, and my curving calves above the high-heeled shoes he had brought me from Stateside.

"Yeah, hey," he breathed.

"No business?" I dimpled at him over my shoulder.

"No business," he nodded happily, taking off his tie.

Actually, I was the one who brought up our salvage problem. I really hadn't intended to. It just kind of popped out because—

Go back to the skirt-raising skit. There I was showing all I owned between my garterbelt and my Florsheims, black nylons and all. David was eyeing me as if I were an Italian movie starlet trying out for a part, and he were the director of the movie she was to star in. He was also stripping down while he strained his eyeballs.

"Slow, honey," he was saying. "We do the whole bit tonight, we pull out all the stops on the organ. But we go slow, understand?"

"Like the thirty-five ways of Lorenzo Veniero?" I giggled.

"Wonderful—for a starter."

"Braggart," I taunted. "Nobody is that potent."

His shorts went down and he stood there like Priapus, grinning proudly at me. I arched my eyebrows. Maybe he was that potent, a *courailleur*, as the French are wont to say. A real man of parts, a good wench.

Up went my skirt. Off came the cocktail dress. Naked in garterbelt and stockings, I walked to him, leaving the gown in a pool of bright red satin on the rug. I came up against him, arms going about his neck. I strained myself to his embrace.

We kissed a long time, our hips nudging together. Against his open lips I whispered, "I'll start with the easy ones first, lover. The ones where you don't have to do very much. Sit down—no, on the edge of the chair there."

We assumed the St. George position, in which I straddled his legs like a rider mounted in the saddle. Gently my hips swung and looped; gently I kissed him, tenderly I let my nipples search out the secrecies of his hairy chest.

Hancarville, in his *Private Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, mentions this posture, and plate XXVII illustrates it. It

is, of course, a variation on the manner in which Andromache is said to have made love with Hector. Thinking of this while I looped my hips about David made me recall the way the Emperor Augustus enjoyed Terentia, so I swung around and presented him with my back without losing contact.

This enabled David to slip his hands under my armpits and grip my breasts. He held them, jiggling them and adding to my delight, so that I had to use all my willpower not to ride him to an eruption. Me, I had one convulsion after the other, but a man is not a woman; he has not her powers of continual enjoyment.

So I pulled free and told David to sit on the carpet. I slid down his thighs until we were one, then we linked arms in that posture called the urn. Our elbows were the handles, our bowed backs the sides.

"Oh!" I exclaimed. "David—it's coming to me!"

"Not yet," he pleaded, eyes closed, mouth a little open.

"No, silly—I mean about the treasure."

David opened his eyes. A moment before they had been glazed with pleasure. Now they were bright with curiosity. His hips stilled their beat.

"What about the treasure?"

"I think I know where it is!"

I told him about the urn I had seen the first morning I had dived for the gold bullion. "There was something wrong with it, David. I didn't realize it at the time, but now I know what it was." I hastened to explain.

"Remember, we said it might be disguised? Well, that's what that urn was—a disguise. Or maybe it was a marker. But the Nazis who put it there made a bad mistake. They chose an urn from a museum."

David scowled. "So? Where else would they get one?"

"Don't you understand? Those amphoras and urns in the museums have been cleaned up and polished for display to the public. An urn on the sea bottom would be encrusted with barnacles and coral growths. The urn I touched with my hand was absolutely smooth. It couldn't have been in the sea for two thousand years."

David pushed me away and got to his feet. His face was beaming down on me as if I'd handed him the greatest treasure in the world. Well, maybe I had. There aren't many treasures I know of that are worth five billion iron men.

His hand caught mine, lifted me to my feet.

"The photos, Eve. Come on, get dressed. We'll go look at the underwater pictures you and Fred took."

"Now?" I wailed.

His hand clapped my left buttock. "Sure, now. When's a better time?"

"Tomorrow morning," I cajoled, putting my arms about his neck. "After a good night in bed."

"We can always sleep."

"I wasn't talking about sleeping, David."

In the end, I slid into slacks and a sweater and went down the hall with him to his room. He got out the glossies we'd taken with the underwater Rolleiflex cameras and riffled through them until he came on the shot of the urn projecting upward from the sand.

His free hand reached for a magnifying lens. He studied the photograph for ten minutes. Then he sighed and nodded.

"You're right. That vase is as smooth as a baby's bottom. Goddam! how come I missed that before, when I was studying these things?"

I squirmed between David and the table, sitting on

his lap. I kissed his stubble-dotted jaw. "You didn't have me to tell you about that urn, David."

He smiled at me, sliding a hand under my Sweetree sweater and caressing my bare back. "You're right, honey. I didn't. I never seem to operate at peak efficiency unless you're somewhere in the vicinity. Without you, I'm not up to par."

"Never mind par," I giggled. "Are you up to mamma?"

He chuckled, "Keep wriggling around with that sweet butt of yours and I will be."

I kept on wriggling my butt, and he was.

David had worked his hand around in front, under the Sweetree knitwear. His fingertips caught hold of my standing nipples and tugged them outward, rotating them slowly. I shivered to the stabs of delight that went slithering around inside me. I promised myself that I was going to wear out my boy friend by morning.

We had tried three postures advised by Lorenzo Veniero. There were thirty-two yet to go. And I knew them all.

Chapter EIGHT

THE URN was a pallid white shape in the sand that held it. I studied it as I watched David Anderjanian and Charley Duncan grasp it, tug, and work it back and forth until it came free. I was holding the suction pipe, which was attached to a length of hose fastened to a motor on the *Hamilcar Barca*, waiting for the signal.

Charley swung the urn to one side. David reached for the airlift. I slapped the pipe into his hand and swam back a few feet.

The airlift pipe sucks away sand from the sea floor, uncovering whatever it is the diver wants to see. It can dig a pretty deep hole when used by an experienced hand, but there is always the danger of the hole caving in and burying the man doing the excavation work.

I was standing by in case of trouble.

The suction pipe began its work. I watched the sand slide away from the floor, and a hole appear as if by magic. David worked on, with Charley at his side to spell him. Gradually, the hole grew bigger.

Soon the men were down in the hole up to their mid-

dles. I was beginning to have my doubts, because by now they should have uncovered something. Then David lifted his head, jerking it sideways as he turned toward me. I swam closer.

I put my hand where he indicated. Wood. Smooth, unrotted wood. Charley was grinning at me, making a fist of his hand and shaking it. We had found the gold bullion.

I watched breathlessly as they uncovered a number of crates. One of them caught hold of and lifted slowly—gold is mighty heavy—until they had it out of the hole. I swam upward toward a number of dangling ropes. I pulled one downward, handing its metal-hooked end to David.

They strapped the rope about the crate, making a sling. Then David gave the rope a tug, and the crate began to edge upward. David made a gesture with his hand, so I began kicking upward after the gold. David and Charley came at my heels.

We clambered up the ladder on the diving ship.

In the hot African sun, David worked a crowbar in between the slats of the crate. He got it half an inch upward when Charley let out a yell.

"It's gold, all right. Man, look at that!"

We all knelt down and stared at sunlight glinting on yellow metal. My heart was slamming hard by this time with complete satisfaction. I did not even mind when Serge Akonov elbowed me aside so he could take a look.

"It's all there, Sergey-boy," I chortled. "And five or six million of that belongs to you."

He nodded triumphantly, patting my bottom with a palm. "True, true. Now tonight we celebrate, *da?*"

We had a lot to celebrate, all right. All that afternoon,

David and Charley took turns with Fred Coleman and Jim Wilson with the suction hose. They freed more than a dozen crates from their hiding places. By dusk, those crates lined the ocean floor, ready for pick-up in the morning.

"Are you going to leave them there?" I asked David as he coiled the airlift hoses on the afterdeck. "I mean, I'm not more than normally suspicious—but five billion dollars is a great temptation to a man."

I jerked a thumb at the skipper of the *Hamilcar Barca*, a swarthy Tunisian with a face like a Barbary Corsair.

David grinned, "Nobody will get the gold, honey. We've taken preventive measures."

I eyed him carefully. "You know something I don't."

"And it's going to be my secret," he winked.

I shrugged. Men are like little boys, sometimes. They have to have their private jokes, I suppose, to bolster their egos. Well, it was out of my hands. I'd done my job. I was not responsible for what happened now.

As a matter of fact, I was home free where the gold bullion was concerned. All I wanted to think about was the celebration tonight. I could belt down as much happy juice as I wanted, and I could sleep all day tomorrow. I went forward to find my Russian roué. He was as free as I.

"You haven't forgotten about the belly-dancer, have you?" I asked. "I'm kind of in the mood for fun and games."

He laughed, sliding his arm about my bare middle. I was in my bikini, and since Serge wore only *le minimum* of the French Riviera, I didn't need his words to tell me that he was ready to make his sacrifice to Venus.

"We shall hire her after her performance, *devushka*.

For a private plaything. It will be the three of us. How would you like that?"

"It'll be a gasser, Serge," I giggled.

I dressed for the celebration that night in a mini-skirted sheath of black cotton. Under it I wore panties, nothing else, except for my high-heeled Florentine shoes. I was ready for a bash.

David and the boys pleaded work as an excuse not to join us. Serge laughed and teased them about all work and no play, but they had to be up early to raise the crates to the diving ship's deck. They wanted to work fast; they wanted no interference from any modern-day pirates.

So Serge and I went off in a taxi, heading for the *medina*. The native quarter in Tunis is cleaner than some *souks* I have seen in North Africa, but there are the same narrow alleyways and smoking brass lamps, the same eerie wails of the Arabian musical instruments, the same veiled women and burnoosed men. Hawkers go by crying, "Jasmine, jasmine!" When I asked Serge why there were so many of them he explained that the men of Tunis wear little bunches of jasmine in their caps, even when they play at cards in the coffee houses.

The taxi pulled up below a wooden balcony jutting out from a white stucco wall. The sounds of the hourglass drums and the wooden flutes were loud as Serge opened the cab's door and I got out. While he paid the driver, I stared at a man walking with flapping clothes, a seller of glassware laden down with the intricately contrived harness that lets him carry his goods wherever he goes. The smell of jasmine was in every lungful of air I breathed.

We walked two blocks, then turned down an alleyway where the painted sign of *The Harem Carpet* hung from

a rusted iron pole. Serge pushed at my elbow. We turned into an arched doorway as a Negro boy with a turban on his head flashed us a big grin, showing perfect white teeth as he hurried to lift the door latch.

We walked into the scent of coffee, wine and *cous-cous*.

I had never been in a Tunisian cafe before. Everywhere there were stone benches covered with straw mats, except where a space was cleared for the performers. Serge gestured me toward a bench where we could sit side by side. The room was almost full of burnoosed Berbers and businessmen in western dress, talking and sipping wine or coffee. Three musicians worried their instruments into producing a tuneless melody.

I said, staring about me, "It doesn't look like much."

"The real action is upstairs, but I have to pay somebody some money. Oh, here he comes now."

A lean, dark man approached, bent over Serge and whispered to him. The Russian brought out a wallet, lifting forth a couple of notes, and passed them to the lean man. The man in the fez nodded and waved a hand at a curtained doorway.

We walked through the curtained doorway to a narrow staircase, up the staircase to a room only faintly lighted by brass oil lamps. There were heavy drapes everywhere, hiding the walls. A couple of imitation stone pillars added to the oriental effect. On the floor has been placed heavy cushions thick enough to sit on. By a horseshoe window, two men were making music on a flute and a drum.

A dozen male customers were seated on the hassocks, sipping Thibar wine and playing a dice game called *tric-trac*, or else staring at the serving girls, all of them young and shapely. These girls wore gauze trousers and bras-

sieres that you could see through. Under them, they wore absolutely nothing.

"This is what we want," nodded Serge.

Two other couples entered while we sampled the Thibar wine: an older man with a girl in her teens, and a couple in their thirties, obviously married and seeking new thrills with which to spice their conjugal embraces. The woman nodded at me, smiling; I smiled back.

The audience was complete, there was no more room, the hassocks were all occupied. The music became louder, more exciting. Its beat seemed to get down inside you, rousing primitive lusts. I moistened my lips with my tongue, wondering what sort of exhibition we were going to see.

The music muted. We heard the slap of bare feet on tile. Then from a little alcove a dusky woman came sliding, naked but for a black satin panel hanging between her thighs to her ankles. A belt of interlocked metal circles held it to her narrow waist. She seemed to flow into the room. There was a serpentine grace to her movements. The flesh of her thighs and belly trembled, and her mature breasts shook ripely.

Her voice gave a shrill cry as her legs parted and her belly began to revolve. Her ventral muscles were extraordinarily developed. Her belly swung as if on springs. Her hips shook in rhythm to the revolutions of her belly, and her breasts began to rotate. Now her bare feet slapped the floor, making her buttock-flesh jiggle. Head thrown back—her long black hair falling down her back to the dimples just above her behind—she moved every part of herself in a sensuous offering of her body to the eyes of the onlookers.

Her hips shook and trembled as she made her way from one hassock to the next. Teeth flashed between

full red lips as she bumped her loins and ground her smooth pelvis into the faces of the men. Her soft laughter rang out lewdly when she turned and waggled her shaking, jumping buttocks at their eyes. The music drowned out the panting of the men, their muffled curses. To my surprise, one of the men leaped up and reached out his hands toward her. The dancer laughed excitedly, pushed him down on his hassock, and inched herself forward, her hips going wild with erotic movement, right in front of his lust-darkened face.

Her hand moved, and the black satin panel fell away. Now her naked loins were only inches from his lips.

"Wow-eee," I breathed.

The fleshy hips stabbed forward, hiding the man's head. His hands were visible, sliding up her thighs and around them to grip her buttocks. The woman went on dancing like that but from time to time she uttered cries of ecstasy.

There were two more dancers in the room now, I saw. Every eye had been fastened on the dusky-skinned woman and her quarry, and so everybody was as surprised as I was to learn that three women were performing for us. These newcomers wore satin panels, too, as they contorted their fleshy bodies before our faces.

A fourth woman joined them, and a fifth.

Some of the onlookers could not contain their passion. One man wrestled a dancer to the floor and hurled himself between her parted thighs, ripping away her satin panel himself. I could hear the teenager sobbing softly, to my left. Her companion had his hand buried between her bare young thighs as her hips jerked convulsively to his caresses.

Now a sixth dancer was emerging from the alcove.

There was a ruby in her navel, pasted there like a red eye. It winked and flashed as her hips worked with savage abandon. A seventh girl came out, stark naked. Then an eighth one joined her.

I began to catch wise. There was a girl for every hassock occupied by a man. They had no performers for the women onlookers; I guess they figured that if the woman wanted to get in on the action, she could always form part of a *seance à trois*.

The girl with the rubied navel advanced on Serge with a wide, inviting smile. She was a dusky wench, with big breasts that jutted purple nipples at the onlookers. Her eyelids were tinted purple, and long black hair fell down her back, giving her an elemental appearance. That Serge appreciated her lewd-nude look was obvious. With shaking fingers, as if nervous, Serge took out a cigarette, and lighted it with his gold lighter. As the woman planted herself in front of him and waggled her hips, he began to toy with the lighter, first gripping it tightly, then loosening his fingers.

"You want me to get lost?" I whispered.

He never heard me. His gold lighter was catching the reflections of a brass lamp in the room, making darts of light sparkle from the polished surface. Its coruscations were being matched by the ruby in the dancer's navel. I stared at the flashes of light, utterly fascinated, as the woman ground her loins before us.

I expected Serge to lose control at any moment and grab the woman, yanking her down between us. He did nothing of the sort. He just sat there as if mesmerized and played with his cigarette lighter. Up past the bouncing breasts of the woman, I saw her eyes fastened in turn on the lighter.

Was he hypnotizing her? Did Serge have some sort of

trick to play on this fleshy wanton whose only garb was the ruby? I leaned forward and watched, scarcely breathing, as the dancer's flexing belly and the light from the gold lighter reflecting deep in the ruby's redness blinked on and off in something like a carnal Morse code....

When Serge finally moved, I started in surprise. I had been so lost in the interplay between them that I had forgotten everything else.

His hand slid the lighter back into his pocket. Then he reached out a hand and ran it up the bare leg of the belly-dancer. Her painted eyelids slid down to cover her eyes as she moaned and slowed her movements. He caressed her for several moments, until she was actually whimpering.

All around us the orgy was at its peak. The dancers were all naked—there were twelve of them, one for every man present. The musicians kept up a muted throbbing sound with their instruments.

There were other sounds, too—erotic cries, the slap of flesh against flesh, the harsh raspings of excited men and women. It all seemed to be part of the orchestration.

I saw the teenager and the woman wrapped in a lesbian embrace as the man lay beside them on the floor, fondling first one and then the other. Most of the men in the audience were clasping their private bellydancers, taking them in one position or another. The other couple, the blonde woman and her husband, were sharing their dancer in a twisting tangle of female limbs and male flesh, panting and sobbing out their pleasure.

Serge had drawn the dancer down across his loins, so that she lay on her back, her hair falling to the floor near my feet. His hands were all over her, caressing the brown bowls of her heavy breasts, pinching and tugging the purple nipples, reaching down her heaving belly to

fondle her so intimately that she gasped and shook with delight.

My mouth was dry as I stared. Involuntarily, my hips moved back and forth. From time to time the woman would open her eyes and stare up at me in a helpless, blind way. I do not believe she saw me—she only lived where his hands touched her flesh. Her red mouth would fall open and she would give a cry, her body would buck and jerk, and then she would lie back again and let him continue his caresses.

I had never seen Serge act like this before. Usually he was very active in his enjoyments. In a way, he puzzled me. I studied him, noting his flushed face and overbright eyes. It dawned on me that he was exciting himself with some emotion other than sex. It was almost as if he were in—danger.

His own excitement infected me.

I was unable to sit still any longer. I had to throw myself into this orgy, become a part of it, merge my individuality with those of the groaning, sobbing men and women all around me.

I got to my feet just as the belly-dancer opened her dark, long-lashed eyes. My mini-skirt came up, giving her an upside-down view of my stockinged legs, my bare white thighs, the black garters and belt which were my sole articles of clothing aside from my dress and shoes.

I stepped forward as her smooth palms reach back to catch hold of my thighs. She drew me above her face.

The mass orgy is not a new thing in our world. It even predates recorded history, for in the very first orgies men were worshipping not a God, but the generative principle itself. The tiny clay statuettes of a big-breasted woman—the artistic representation of the

mother, the *Magna Mater*—as well as the enlarged male member, that have been found all over the world, in Europe, Asia and Africa, indicate that the first religion of man was sexual.

He adored the life principle. And the life principle, to his primitive mind, were embodied in the male and female genitals. They brought life to the woman, and they must be worshipped as befitted their status. A dawn-age Priapus and Venus, the givers of life to the tribe, the furnishers of warriors and future mothers so that the tribe might be increased and strengthened, were their gods.

Together with the sun, these were all-important to early man. For the sun brought life, too, since it caused crops to grow and trees to go into leaf, so that the animals on which man depended on for his food might live and grow strong.

The Egyptians showed their god Osiris with an erect organ. The bull Apis, also a generative figure, was adored. Isis was the Venus of the Nile, the harlot and the wife, the mother and the whore, just as Aphrodite was in Greece, and Ishtar in Babylon, and Venus in Rome.

The earliest beginnings of these sex gods is lost in antiquity, but we know that they were worshipped with orgies. It was a good and holy thing to lie with strange women, so that the sex-god and sex-goddess might be glorified. These early men drank their barley beer and got drunk—Dionysus and Bacchus were the gods of wine—and they lay with women who were not their legal mates. In the fury and intensity of their copulations, they showed their love for the gods.

Like now, man.

I was going crazy with the belly-dancer between my thighs, watching what Serge Akonov was doing to her.

Glancing up, I could see a man caught between the tensing and loosening thighs of another dancer. I watched a woman in the St. George position squirm and twist as she fed pleasure to the man below her and to her own flesh. Everywhere in this North African *funduk*, men and women adored Priapus and Venus as they had done four thousand years ago under the names of Baal and Astarte. I guess human nature never changes, only its customs.

Serge was pushing the dancer down over the hassock, settling himself between her widening, uplifted thighs. Her hands were sunk into my bare buttocks, her mouth was a wildfire goading me to madness. I watched as Serge moved forward, watched as he thrust and disappeared, heard the muffled shriek from the lips that kissed me.

I was crying out, biting my lip.

At that moment, I was no longer a thinking human being. I was an animal. I laughed, I mewed, I screeched my delight. I was not Eve Drum, I was woman incarnate. And as such, I behaved.

I thrust the belly-dancer away, then I lunged at Serge and captured him. I wanted only to assuage the needs of my own female flesh. Forgotten was my mission in Tunisia, and the fact that five billion dollars waited for the taking out there in the waters beyond the Gulf of Tunis. Now I was just a female in rut.

How long the orgy lasted, I do not know. I can remember being pulled off Serge and seeing the dancer—her name was Fatima—slide into my place. Then there was another man in my arms, and he was all I wanted or needed at the moment.

When the last brass oil lamp smoked itself out, I found myself staggering down the narrow steps into the

inn proper, a little ahead of my Russian roué. The huge common room was empty. Only the early morning sunlight was there, casting long black shadows as it touched the stone benches and their mats.

Serge found a taxi a block away and waved me to join him. Neither of us were in shape to do any diving, this day. All I wanted to think about was getting into my bed and pulling the coverlets up over my head.

But before I did that, I had to see David Anderjanian.

During the evening, I had learned something about Serge Akonov that my case officer ought to know. Something that made me actually afraid.

I only hoped that David would know what to do.

Chapter NINE

The sunlight was warm on the deck of the *Hamilcar Barca*.

Piled high in that sunshine were twenty big crates, loaded to their topmost slats with gold. Five billion dollars in gold bullion, all of it beonging to Uncle Sam. I felt so good, I could have wept.

I almost did weep, because I was suffering the mother-goddess of all female hangovers. The only thing that made me feel better was the sight of Serge Akonov's face. His eyes held dark bags and his cheeks looked gaunt. We had lapped up enough cheap Thibar wine and engaged in enough of a love-in last night to make us both feel plenty wasted.

David Anderjanian looked the picture of health, of rugged manhood. Damn him! Jim, Charley and Fred also looked mighty good.

"Five billion bucks," murmured Jim Wilson, shaking his head.

"And you get six or seven million of it, Serge," murmured Fred Coleman. "All I get is my salary."

The Russian chuckled. "King Serge, they will call me—if I ever go to live in South America."

Something in his voice swung me around. "If? I thought you had it all worked out. You were going to Rio de Janiero or Buenos Aires. A little villa overlooking Sugar Loaf Mountain. Or a town house on the *Calle Florida*. What changed your mind?"

His broad shoulders shrugged. "There is no reason. The world is full of a number of interesting places. I don't know whether I want to tie myself down to any one of them."

The sunlight was hot on my blonde head. Originally, I had not intended to tag along today. David Anderjanian had changed my mind for me by ordering me to come, as soon as he discovered that Serge Akonov was going to be on hand when they raised the gold crates from the sea.

"You must be there," his voice had commanded this morning, through a headache that split the top of my skull.

After a cold shower and a dozen aspirin tablets, I was ready to make the scene. For breakfast, I had half a bucket of tomato juice plus a quart of hot black coffee, so now, at least, I could walk.

The blue Mediterranean water looked cool and inviting. I wanted to jump over the edge and swim down to the cool depths where the Nazi treasure had been buried. Instead, I had to stand here and look at all those crates as if they were going to get up and walk.

Suddenly David said coldly, "Why don't you tell her the truth, Akonov?" I blinked at David, then turned to Serge.

"What's he talking about?" I asked.

David gestured at the horizon. I ignored his gesture

until I saw that everybody else was looking in that direction, so I looked too. I had seen a smoke-smudge to the north a little earlier, but had paid it no never-mind, assuming it was only a freighter making for the port of Tunis.

The ship was not a freighter.

It was a grey Russian destroyer of the *Kresta* class.

Serge Akonov said crisply, "You are all fools. Did you really think you could trick me into defecting? Capitalistic idiots!"

"Serge!" I wailed. "What are you saying?"

He sneered at me. "You are the biggest fool of all. Did you honestly believe that your female wiles were trapping me in a web to make me defect? *Bozhe mor!* I went to visit you the first time in the Tretyakov museum under orders. Our entire intelligence system realized that you were not the typical girl guide. You stood out like a sore thumb."

"Gee thanks," I grated between my teeth. "Your command of American idioms is really outstanding!"

He smiled at me pityingly. "I was under orders to make your acquaintance, to take you to bed, to give you my nose and let you lead me by it." He chuckled thickly. "Those photographers you killed were part of a plan to take pictures of *you*, to arrest *you* on a morals charge—not me. I was in very good standing with my superiors. There is no Alexei Davidoff."

"You *bastard*," I breathed.

He spread his hands. "All is fair in love and war, *da?* You and I fought our own little Cold War *nyet?* I won because I am smarter than you, baby."

Cold War indeed!

I raised my hand to belt him one, but David caught my

arm. I guess Serge figured we were all scared of him and his big Russian destroyer, because he began to laugh.

"*Da, da*, No Alexei Davidoff! I admit you caught on to the photographers—the clumsy fools!—but you misinterpreted their purpose. Their purpose was not to catch me in my looser moments, but to catch you. When you killed one and learned about the pictures, I had to play along with you until I got my orders from the Presidium.

"Then when you revealed the fact that you knew about the treasure, I had to play it a little differently. I went to my superiors, said you had fallen in love with me and wanted me to defect. I—er—lied a little when I added that you alone knew about the Nazi treasure, and were offering me some of it to leave Russia."

The big Russian destroyer was much nearer by this time, within cannon range. But since the diving ketch did not move, it came about and sat there, waiting. It was sleek and lean, part of the Black Sea fleet that had been bulging its muscles recently in the Mediterranean Sea, harassing the United States Seventh Fleet with its sometimes childish and always annoying tactics.

Right now, we were the ones being harassed. Those big cannon were staring down our throat. Despite the North African sunlight, cold sweat broke out on my forehead. I looked helplessly at David, who spread his hands and gave me a despairing look.

Serge was watching us closely. He murmured, "Since you know about the treasure that I had some day hoped to make my own, I had to reveal its existence. The Presidium complimented me. It was decided that I was to pretend to defect—but to make it look good. We put on an act that——"

"Now hold on!" I snarled. "Do you mean to tell me that those men in Sochi with you were——"

"Acting, Miss Drum. You don't think we'd have been so stupid as not to leave the keys at the registration desk if we really wanted to trap you, do you? no. We were playing for big stakes, and the lives of our comrades must be sacrificed occasionally to win such a victory. Like the men in the patrol boats you blew sky-high. They were not in on the scheme, they were merely following out their orders, but they had been instructed to shoot wide, to let us get away in that helicopter."

"Now, just hold it a darn minute," I snapped. "Those men in the whirlybird weren't fooling. If I hadn't had that gas vial, we'd have been taken prisoner."

"An error," Serge said loftily, waving a big hand. "There was no time to alert our men in Turkey. They tumbled onto your plot, stole the helicopter, and intended to make us all prisoners. Actually, my superiors would have had to arrange for us to escape, had they succeeded."

"Why didn't you just kill me and get the treasure for yourselves?" I wanted to know.

Serge laughed. "It gives us a greater pleasure to let you Americans do all the work of getting it—and then take it away from you."

A great light began to dawn on me. "Those two men in Anatya, in the hotel. They weren't trying to kill you, they were out to gun *me*!" I slapped my forehead, hard. "Oh, what an idiot I am."

I had seen the damn headboard. I knew they wouldn't be able to shoot Serge Akonov through it, but I had gone on trusting him like some dumb bunny. They had been out to shoot only me, and I had never tumbled to it.

"They too, were operating under old orders."

"All along, I've played the patsy," I grumbled.

"All along, Miss Drum," simpered my Russian roué.
"Now you have the last laugh."

He did not answer that one. He merely made a little bow. Out of the corner of my eye I saw David Andrianian covering his smiling mouth with a hand.

Serge said, "I did not dare contact them, you understand. I didn't even know who they were, or I might have taken a chance and warned them off. I was as much taken by surprise then as you are now." He shrugged his magnificent shoulders in a philosophical gesture. "They had to give their lives for Mother Russia, that we might see this—how do you Americans say it?—this *caper* through to its successful conclusion."

"You mean, you get the gold."

"We do indeed, Miss Drum."

A tender was chugging from the destroyer. A man in the uniform of a captain was in the prow, using a mechanical voice-thrower to talk to us.

"Attention! Attention! This is Captain Poltyavin. You are to disembark, all of you. This is an order."

The owner of the *Hamilcar Barca* protested. Serge turned toward burly, bearded Suleiman Bourgheb, pointing out that if he did not want to leave the ship he could stay on it when it was shot out from under him.

"For it will be blown to pieces, this ship, just as soon as the gold is taken off it. We have no wish to kill you. Your lives are permitted you. But you must go overboard, at once—And without weapons."

Captain Poltyavin and a dozen armed men in Russian Naval Infantry uniforms—they correspond to our U.S. Marines—clambered up the ladder to the deck. The men fanned out, automatic rifles at the ready.

"I shall protest this boarding party as an act of piracy," David said. "We are on the high seas. We are committing

no crime. We are engaged in marine archeological research."

"Do that little thing," snapped Captain Poltyavin.

He turned to Serge Akonov. "The gold is in these crates?"

When my Russian roué nodded his head, the officer went on, "We shall transfer it aboard the destroyer at once."

Swinging toward us, the captain said. "You are to go into our ship's tender immediately."

Serge Akonov smirked his triumph at us. I wretched at the thought that I had ever liked him. I said loud enough so that everyone could hear me, "Let's get off this garbage scow boys. The maggots are out in full force."

Captain Poltyavin flushed angrily. His mouth opened as if to bark an order, but he himself was under orders, so he contented himself with waving an arm at his Naval Infantrymen.

They stepped forward. Seething with fury, I led the way to the rail where a rope ladder had been lowered to the tender that was rubbing hulls with the *Hamilcar Barca*. I went over the side first, then the others came following. The last sight I had before I stepped into the tender was the puzzled face of Serge Akonov peering down at me. I guess he figured we were all taking this piracy mighty lightly.

I called up at him, "If we had only one cannon on deck, you wouldn't be getting away with this!" His answer was a harsh laugh.

The tender pulled away from the diving boat.

We retreated for half a mile, watching the destroyer nose closer to the *Hamilcar Barca*. We perched there, silently raging as the crates went over the side in a sling, until they were all on the Russian deck.

The bearded owner of the diving boat was muttering curses. "Damn them. They're going to sink my ship."

David quieted him by assuring him that he would receive full payment for the loss of the *Hamilcar Braca*. He subsided with sullen resignation, but he eyed us as if mentally cursing us all for cowards.

When the destroyer was half a mile from the diving boat, its cannons opened fire. We pulled further away, watching as its high-explosive shells slammed into the converted ketch. When a shell hit the fuel tanks, there was an explosion, and a towering flame lifted skyward. The *Hamilcar Barca* split apart in an eruption of flying wood and metal.

The thunderous roar of its dying spasms almost deafened me.

We watched as the wreckage sank beneath the sea. Then the destroyer turned its stern toward us and moved slowly into the distance. I saw tears in the eyes of Suleiman Bourgheb.

"It was a good ship, a good ship," he muttered.

"You'll get a better one," David promised.

"We didn't even fight," the man growled.

"Fight a destroyer?" Jim Wilson asked.

The man turned his head, studying our faces. "I know you could not have won. That is not the point. But you could have put up a token resistance."

"Why?" David asked. "They got nothing but a lot of sand."

The bearded man thought that over, his face screwed into seamed lines of deep thought, "Sand? They got only sand?" His eyes widened as understanding came to him. "You mean—you fooled them?"

David hugged me tight against him. "Thanks to Oh Oh Sex! Yes. I can't tell you all about it, Sully, but rest

assured that the Russians got nothing worth fighting over."

Suleiman Bourghch opened his eyes wide. "Miss Drum saved the day? I—I don't understand."

I felt called upon to explain.

"Last night I went slumming with the Russian. He took me to a *medina* hot spot called the Harem Carpet. It was quite a place—especially the second floor."

His eyes got really big at this point. He choked and stuttered, "You went upstairs in the Harem Carpet? *Mash' allah!* And you weren't shocked?"

"Of course I was shocked," I yelped, playing the ingenu part. "What kind of girl do you think I am? But I was on duty, and my duty takes me into strange places at times."

"Excuse my astonishment, please," he murmured.

"Well, when one of the belly-dancers came sliding over to our hassock, I noticed that she was the only one wearing a ruby in her bellybutton. I figure that it was for the purpose of identification.

"Because when she went into her act, Serge Akonov pretended to be nervous. He got out his gold cigarette lighter and lit up his cigarette. But he did not put the lighter away. He kept fiddling around with it so that the highly polished surface of the lighter gave off reflections.

"Those reflections showed up in the ruby.

"At first I thought that Serge was trying to hypnotize her, because he kept moving the cigarette lighter back and forth so that it picked up the flame from a nearby brass lamp. I was damn near mesmerized myself, watching those lights come and go.

"Until I found myself saying words under my breath.

"Tomorrow . . . tomorrow . . . tomorrow. That's what I

was saying. And then it finally dawned on me that I was repeating what I was seeing. Serge Akonov was sending a Morse Code message to the belly-dancer with his gold lighter. And I could read that message in the ruby, as it picked up the lighter reflections.

"The Russian was taking his time with his message. He didn't want the girl to make any mistakes. Then he got out the rest of the bit. The whole thing read, 'Tomorrow the gold will be taken on board. Be there.'"

"*Insh'allah*," breathed Suleiman Bourgheb admiringly.

"Naturally, I warned David last night when we got back to the hotel. Or maybe it was this morning. Like man, that got him out from between the sheets, but fast. He got dressed and beat it. I went back to bed."

"Out of which I roused her, as soon as we headed for the treasure, to take it on board," David explained.

The tender was nearing the quay. The four *Hamilcar Barca* crewmen at the oars were making good time. I had the feeling they were afraid the Russian destroyer might turn around and send a couple of shells their way.

Suleiman Bourgheb asked, "But what did you do when Miss Drum woke you? How did you remove the gold and put the sand in? My ship never left the dock last night. And you four men could not have performed such a task by yourselves!"

David grinned as the tender bumped a piling.

"Sully, I'm not going to tell you any more—for your own sake. The less you know about this the better for you."

The ex-owner of the *Hamilcar Barca* glowered, then shrugged with Arabic acceptance of *kismet*. "It is the will of Allah," he nodded, and reached for a rope with which to moor the tender.

David, Jim, Fred, Charley and I headed for the hotel.

"We've got to pack and vamoose," David said. "I don't want to be here when the Russians discover that they don't have any gold."

"Why didn't that captain check to see if it was gold he was getting? You would have. So would I."

"The Russian character is a little different from yours and mine, honey. Russians are accustomed to obeying orders blindly, without question. Captain Poltyavin had been ordered to transfer the crates off the *Hamilcar Barca* and onto the destroyer. Not for him to reason why. He did what he was told to do. Besides, your Sergey-boy had sent the message that the gold was on board."

David grew thoughtful. "You know, I wouldn't be surprised if something nasty happened to Serge Akonov. His superiors may think he made a deal with us, after all. They won't be able to understand how we could have tumbled to their little trick unless Akonov betrayed the plan—for that promised five or six million dollars."

"Goody," I smiled, clapping my hands.

David nodded. "A nice long term in their Siberian slave labor camp, the Kolyma mines. Yes, I have the feeling that that's where your Party playboy will wind up."

I shivered.

In the Belvedere, I packed swiftly. I wanted no part of staying here until some KGB men came hunting me. I rang for a bellhop and followed him down to the main lobby. Charley Duncan was waiting, with forms to fill out.

"Fred, Jim and I are going to Rome, honey," he informed me. "We'll take your luggage with us."

"Oh? But where does that leave David and me?"

He looked genuinely surprised. "You mean you don't know? I thought David would have clued you in on the arrangements by this time. Maybe you'd better check with him in his room. I'll be seeing you. Oh Oh Sex—and *blegadaryu*. Or 'God bless', as Serge Akonov might say."

He was reminding me that I had never really learned what David had done to get the gold out of, and the sand into, those crates. Oh, I was aware that he'd done something, but I didn't know the details. So I kissed Charley on the cheek, turned on a heel, and marched toward the elevator.

David came to the door wearing a towel about his lean middle. The rest of him was very tanned. I slipped in and he closed the door behind me.

My glance about the room was puzzled. "Where's your gear? Or is Charley handling that, too?"

"Just what *did* happen early this morning, David? How were you able to transfer that gold? And where'd you transfer it to?"

"Eve, honey, how do you think we were going to sneak it back to Uncle Sam country, even if Captain Poltyavin hadn't come along?"

"I never gave it a thought. I was too busy getting my Russian roué where we wanted him."

"There's a nuclear submarine waiting in deep water outside the bay to pick us up. It's been there for two weeks, standing by for you and Akonov to come out of Russia."

I sat down, a little stunned.

David laughed and said, "We don't have much time. I'm going to take a shower. You want to hear, come along."

He flipped off the towel. I did a flip myself.

"David, I didn't know," I murmured.

I hated to spoil my pretty new Balmain, so I got to my feet, yanked it off over my head, and draped it on a chair. I kicked off my shoes, unsnapped my stockings and rolled and off, then tossed aside my garterbelt and marched into the shower.

"So talk," I said, wriggling past the curtain to stand with my naked David in the glass-enclosed shower stall.

"When you came into my room the other night, after you'd been out with Serge," he began, running soap into a lather on his hairy chest, "I knew that I had to revise our original plans. If a Russian destroyer was going to steal the crates, I'd make sure they didn't get the gold."

"Here, let me do that," I murmured.

I ran the soap down his back, getting up a good froth. My hands were gentle, almost caressing; I like David Anderjanian very much. I've even thought of him as husband material. He squirmed a little when I got to his behind, but he went on talking.

"So I got dressed, radioed the submarine, and told them what had to be done. The submarine has a crew of frogmen, but they bullied other crewmen into the job of swimming to the treasure site, unloading the crates of gold and filling them with sand. They used a couple of—hey, go easy there."

"Turn around," I directed.

My hands became very gentle, indeed. David choked, gasped, tried to pull himself away, but the shower stall was a little too small.

"The sub crew used a couple of underwater sea-sleds to carry the gold back to the sub. Next morning, when we got there, the crates were waiting neatly on the

bottom, filled with sand, for the *Hamilcar Barca* to lift them deckside."

The water drumming down on us was warm and soothing. Maybe that's why my blood was pumping so hard, and why David was having his own personal heat wave while I was inching forward, letting my hardened nipples slide around on his chest.

"Very clever, very clever," I murmured.

"Eve, we don't have much t-time."

"You haven't explained about you and Magda. I think I'm still angry at you, David. A woman scorned, and all that."

"She was a cold fish. Besides, I was under orders to make love to her, to see if I could learn anything more than what she'd already told us."

"Is that the ruth, David?"

"Honest Injun—cross my heart."

"Did you say heart—or hard?"

David said dreamily, "It's going to be a long trip back to the States in that submarine."

He was crouching, putting his hands under my thighs and lifting me. I lifted easily. I rose up and then sank down, fitting myself around him.

"Ohhhh," he breathed.

"Yeah," I answered, eyes closed.

My inner muscles worked as they had with that gas vial in the helicopter. My boy friend was really panting by this time, while my head was echoing with the mental thunder of Tchaikovsky.

"You really do like my nutcracker, Sweet, don't you, David?" I giggled, nutcracking away.

His hand slapped my right buttock. David dislikes puns.

Then we settled down to our showery sexcitements.

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